

POEMS AND TRANSLATIONS





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POEMS AND TRANSLATIONS.

BY

HENRY LOWNDES.

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P R E F A C E.

THESE poems which I now submit, "non sine vanô aurarum et silvæ metû," to, I hope, an indulgent public, have been for the most part composed within the last ten or twelve years. I must take this opportunity of recording my obligation to Mr. Russell, the editor of the *Liverpool Daily Post* and *Journal*, for his kindness in inserting many of the smaller pieces at various times in those publications.

LIVERPOOL,

November 4, 1879.

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POEMS.

SONNET I.

To sing, to try to sing, to fail, is gain,
And much is won if but by weak endeavour ;
And though we cannot reach the poct's strain,
Some touch of beauty warms the heart for ever.
No earnest effort e'er was wrought in vain.
To be a follower in the muse's train,
Low-voiced, perhaps, and humble, is to hear
High things and holy, full of pride and joy,
For ever ringing in the trancèd ear,
Things ever free from this base world's alloy.
It is to dwell 'midst fancies sweet and dear
With which the cares our worldly hearts employ
Meanly contrast—proud power and empty state,
Thoughts all with sense of pomp and worthless
wealth elate.

MY LITTLE BARK.

WITH little bark and lowly sail
I hug the shore and shun the gale.
Let others dare the storm-swept sea ;
The sheltered peaceful bay for me.

My little craft I hand and steer
And veer about without a fear ;
To more adventurous hearts I leave
To fare forth where the billows heave.

And tiny though my shallop be
It is a ship, and on a sea ;
And something of the joy I share
Of those who farther seaward dare.

SONNET II.

As one who solemnly the aisle doth pace
Of some old minster, with most gentle tread,
As if the awful genius of the place
To rouse from antique slumbers he doth dread ;
With reverent eye each sculptured arch doth trace,
Or the carved fretwork of the roof o'erhead ;
And 'midst this mighty work of nobler days
Feels dwarfed and humbled in his inward breast,
A feeble creature small : such reverent gaze
I cast around me, with such awe oppressed,
Daring the muse's sacred fane to pace,
While, with a deep and wondering love imprest,
I look on each calm-browed immortal face
That doth the inmost shrine of this high temple grace.

HOME.

NOT 'mid the scenes I love
Standeth my home ;
No sky of blue above,
Far is the ocean's foam.

No sunny flowery glade,
No mead to tread,
No leafy tree to shade
Labour's weary head.

Dingy our canopy,
Dreary our skies ;
No setting sun for me,
No radiant sunrise.

Yet, if a little way
I chance to roam,
Grateful and glad and gay
Turn I to my home.

SONNET III.

SCORN not the humble flower that in some nook
Unnoted springs, unheeded fades away,
Nor cares to lift its timid head to look
What neighbouring beauties their gay pomp display.
Who knows what fragrant scents the wandering air
From that poor flower in its warm breath may bear?
Who knows what healing virtues may be found
In that shy bud that cleaveth to the ground?
Nature doth not forget thee, little one!
The same dews rest thy tender leaves upon
As deck the waving foxglove, the same rays
Warm thy pale petals in the summer blaze
As those that bid the blushing rose unfold
Her loveliness, and show her heart of gold.

SONNET IV.

TO THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

LADY, that noble station nobler makest,
That rulest by right of beauty and of grace,
Easy dominion o'er our hearts thou takest
With each sweet smile that decks thy youthful face.
Thy fiery fathers of an older day
Came bearing down from the tempestuous North,
Their wild beards beaded with the ocean spray,
And their unsparing falchions gleaming forth,
Filling our troubled land with war's alarms.
Thou for those times dost make most sweet amends,
Thine only weapons smiles, thine armour charms.
Some welcome spirit ancient Odin sends !
If a whole people's love encircling thee
Can happy make, O lady, happy be !

April, 1868.

THE EUR YDICE.

SAIL on, O gallant frigate ;
Behold the land in view !
All gay is thine apparel,
All stalwart is thy crew !

Thy voyage is almost finished,
Home lies before thine eyes ;
Rest from the tempest's raging !
Rest from the sea-bird's cries !

A squall ! a heave to leeward,
A lurch, a cry, a scream !
And all that was so lovely
Has vanished like a dream.

A void ! a false wave smiling !
A silent tragedy.
A wonderment, a sighing,
A secret of the sea !

OUR PRINCESS.

THERE was grief in the lordly palace
And grief where poor men dwell,
And on city proud, and on hamlet,
The shadow of sorrow fell.

We mourn not the high-born damsel,
Fair child of a kingly race,
Royal in queenly talent,
Royal in queenly grace.

We grieve that a princely spirit
From its earthly home hath gone,
And few so gentle and loving
Are left the earth upon.

And we think of one saddest mourner
In lonely state apart,
And pray that amid her trouble
God may uphold her heart.

December 19, 1878.

IN MEMORIAM.

BORN in purple, bred in care,
Nurtured in a foreign air,
Kingly natured, gentle, brave,
Borne to an untimely grave !

Love shall never on thee smile,
Flattery never thee beguile ;
Thou dost lie where pomp and pride
And high estate are laid aside.

Prouder fortunes, longer life,
Had but brought thee care and strife.
Happy art thou in thy grave,
Kingly natured, gentle, brave !

July 15, 1879.

SONNET V.

A VALEDICTION.

SAIL proudly, gallant ship, across the sea,
For thou art freighted with a noble freight,
Youth, beauty, courage, gentle poesy,
High-beating hearts with happy hope elate !
A lively branch from our own royal tree,
Time-honoured tree and stately, thou dost bear,
That on Columbia's shores shall planted be,
And on her virgin soil shall flourish fair ;
So England's children in that western land
The shadow of the parent tree shall share,
And hand in hand with the old people stand
Proudly the empire's banner to upbear.
Sail swiftly, gallant ship, across the sea,
High hopes and happy dreamings sail with thee !

November 15, 1878.

THE GLORIES OF THIS WORLD.

THE glories of this world are free
To all, however mean we be ;
Prince nor monarch in his pride
Can one tittle from us hide.

The sun, the moon, each silver star,
To all a splendid dowry are ;
The frosty air, the summer breeze,
All earth's children love to please.

No charm of mountain or of plain,
No gambol of the mighty main,
No spectacle of earth or sky,
But shine abroad to every eye.

The nightingale its best doth sing
Alike to peasant and to king ;
The lark with equal wing doth soar,
And pour its song to rich and poor.

To one may bird and tree belong,
But not the greenness nor the song ;
No wayfarer but hath his share
Of all that lovely is and fair.

What though man frame a secret bower,
And fence around each perfumed flower,
The winds abroad their fragrance blow
That all their loveliness may know.

In lesser things distinctions be,
But, while these glories all are free,
There is for all men bounteous store,
And, save the thankless, none are poor.

SORROW.

As some wreath of flaky snow,
Quickly come, doth slowly go,
Slowly melts before the rays
Of the sun of winter days,
So doth sorrow deeply felt
Slowly from the vexed heart melt.
Time our sun is, that each day
Sorrow softly melts away:
Each day finds us sorrowing,
But takes somewhat from the sting,
Bringing ever back our grief
But evermore with more relief,
Mingling something of the gladness
Earth is full of with our sadness.
Very slow, O Time, thy cure;
Almost unperceived, but sure !

FROST.

(AFTER THE GERMAN.)

THE night is dark and cold and calm,
Frost rules the earth as with a charm ;
The trees above, the fields below,
The hills, the streams, are wreathed in snow.
No sound disturbs the silence deep,
And all the world is wrapped in sleep.
O Frost, freeze sternly my worn heart !
To it for once thy peace impart ;
Let me not envy, all in vain,
The blessed calm of hill and plain !

ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.)

THOU cam'st, with soft steps thou didst go,
A fleeting guest in earthly land.
Whence? Whither? This alone we know:
From out God's hand into God's hand.

DOG AND MAN.

HIS master's voice was harsh and gruff,
Coarse and hard his hand, but Ruff
Could not worship him enough.

Many a rent the curious eye
In his raiment might espy,
But Ruff could no defect descry.

Of food and drink but little store
Had he ; he was old and poor ;
But the dog did him adore.

His limbs were weak, his pace was slow,
His friends were gone, his lot was woe :
Humbly behind him Ruff doth go.

Only this one faithful thing
Did unto his fortune cling :
Unto Ruff he was a king.

CHRISTMAS.

THE holly shines with ruddy glow,
Festoonèd is the mistletoe,
With happy face and nimble toe
Blithe dancers trip it to and fro.

Bright flare the waxen tapers tall,
Swift shadows fleet around the wall,
Merrily, merrily, in the hall
Christmas measures tread we all.

Let the Christmas toast go round,
Mirth and jollity abound,
Not one joyless heart be found,
Let the Christmas toast go round !

NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1878.

THE Old Year, weary, goes his way,
Forespent with care and sorrow,
And the bright New Year, young and gay,
Bids us a glad good morrow.

Like all young folk he thinks he knows
All things that shall befall ;
A silver trumpet loud he blows
And thus proclaims to all :—

“ A season we shall have of gold,
A golden harvest-home,
And richly laden ships behold
In crowds the ocean roam.

“ Our summer shall be warm and bright,
Our flowery meads rejoice,
The songsters shall our earth delight
With happiest music's voice.

“No fierce alarms shall shake the air,
No drum or battle sound,
And ne'er shall pale-faced famine dare
’Mid such sweet scenes be found.

“The gentle hand of Nature will
Man’s horrid deeds conceal,
And all war’s wounds, with tender skill,
Will swift repair and heal.”

The Old Year murmured, “Happy youth,
Thy soul with bright hope beams!
Ah, may thy visions sing the truth,—
I, also, dreamt my dreams.”

SONNET VI.

I SAW the beauteous orb that rules the night
High in the midst of heaven sit serene,
In majesty an Empress. Calm delight
She breathed ; and in a circle round were seen,
At distance due, as fitteth humble train,
The billowy clouds in fleecy robes arrayed ;
They seemed down kneeling in the ætherial plain,
Making obeisance to the regal maid.
The lesser lamps of heaven, all undismayed
At her strange glory, glimmered in her train.

It was a perfect scene of sweet repose,
And I too seemed to kneel ; within my soul
A tide of deep content and joy arose,
That strife, and care, and grief away did roll.

SONNET VII.

THE EGLANTINE.

FROM a wild hedge a little branch shot up,
And on its trembling top a little flower
That opened out like some inviting cup
To hold the warm drops of each summer shower,
And from the genial moisture could distil
Rare fragrance, fit for fairest lady's bower ;
The wondrousness of that delicious smell
Only its rosy beauty could excel.
O little flower, whose life is very short,
For the first blast will hurry thee away,
Great is the lesson thou hast sweetly taught
As thou sitt'st smiling on thy slender spray ;
May we all nature's blessings so employ
That we may shed around delight and joy.

SONNET VIII.

LOVE doth not only love to breath and smile
In the sequestered flower-sprinkled glade,
Or in the lovely wood-embosomed isle
Where nymphs float bathing in the sheltered shade ;
But often in the busy town is found,
And many a weary spirit doth beguile,
And where she lights is alway hallowed ground.
She is alway so fresh and rosy bright,
And alway hath such flowers to strew around,
And is so ever full of gay delight,
We needs must think her some fair nymph the while,
Wont with light feet o'er fragrant meads to roam ;
Yet town or wild are equal in her sight,
We ne'er for love need wander far from home.

"I EARLY ROSE."

I EARLY rose, I took no rest,
I was so eager in my quest,
By such consuming zeal possessed,
A fever burned within my breast.

I won my prize, I filled my hand,
I was the lord of hall and land,
I style myself by title grand
And servile lackeys round me stand.

I count, I reckon o'er my store,
And as I count I long for more,
And 'mid my riches am I poor,
Yea, poorer than I was before.

Yea, poorer than the meanest hind
That in my wide domain I find
Who humbly, with contented mind,
Thanks heaven for its mercies kind ;

Who takes his meagre fare with zest,
Who sinks each night to balmy rest,
Of heaven's dearest gift possessed,
Contentment dwelling in his breast.

His heart is free, and warm, and bold,—
Mine timorous, anxious, poor, and cold ;
And I a slave, although of gold
The fetters be that me enfold.

A BIRTHDAY.

GENTLE Time can make no stay,
His busy hand none can delay,
And every visit he doth pay
He something gives and takes away.

He something takes of youthful grace
But something leaveth in its place,
Of sweet and noble thoughts the trace,
That grave new charms upon the face.

The form erect he somewhat bends,
Perchance a few grey hairs he sends,
But with these feats his power ends,
And we have that that makes amends.

For whilst our poor frames fade away
Our inner spirit blooms alway,
And Time himself makes short the way
That leads our darkness into day.

HARVEST.

HOME from Autumn's plains are borne
Tottering sheaves of yellow corn,
And now the rifled fields belong
To gleaner merry with her song.

Covers huge and tankard's foam
Speak the jocund harvest-home,
And with face rotund and glad
Carols loud the farmer lad.

Now each ancient reverend pile,
Garlanded with fruit, doth smile,
And each glad-voiced choir doth raise
Song of thanks for summer days.

Be the harvest small or great,
Be it early, be it late,
Equal voice of praise we lift ;
Shall we measure such a gift ?

PHILOSOPHY.

WHEN thou hast but little bliss,
And the world goes all amiss ;
When friends leave thee, and when sorrow
Drowns the day and clouds the morrow ;
When those to whom thou wert so kind
Tetchy and ingrate you find ;
When thy riches all have fled,
And the cold winds hurt thy head ;
When all comfort flies and ease,—
Then remember Socrates,*
Who disdained to care three straws
For all the ills mischance can cause.

* *Vide* Chaucer.

SONNET IX.

SNOWDROPS.

PALE offerings of the hard and frozen earth
To the cold winter sun ! a silver song
Ye seem to pour forth at your early birth,
Saying, "The days of darkness last not long!"
The secret of his hidden summer wealth
Old earth can keep no more, but sends you forth
Among the sheltering shrubs, somewhat by stealth
Lest the rude Wind from out the boisterous North
Should slay you with his icy arrows strong ;
But lo ! the days of darkness last not long !
Ye are the harbingers of smiling Spring,
Of new life and new joy and youthful health.
Bright on your tiny stems, ye all day sing,
"O joy ! The days of darkness last not long !"

SONNET X.

TO THE DAFFODIL.

GORGEOUS thyself, this is not all thy praise ;
Thou art the prelude that doth loud declare
That youthful Spring adown her flowery ways
Comes dancing, flinging incense on the air.
We saw the glittering buds begem the sprays ;
Snowdrop and crocus and the pale primrose
Did timidly put forth their petals fair ;
But boldly thou thy beauty dost disclose,
And dost the end of Winter's reign declare.

Winter hath lovely scenes—the snowy plain,
The trees arrayed in silvery plumies, the still,
Frost-bound, enchanted river ; but in vain
He tries to please : we look askance until
We see thy golden face, O gorgeous daffodil !

SONNET XI.

THE heart of Nature is so sweet and kind,
And she hath still such joy in her outpouring,
Her richest treasures are not hard to find ;
They ask no delving deep or lofty soaring.
The sun-lit air, and the inspiring wind,
The smell of flowery fields, and the soft roar
Of the most ancient, but still bounding, sea,
That, with its sparkling depths and crestlets hoar,
Is type of all things glad and all things free ;
And cheerfulness, and toil-rewarding health ;
And blessed sleep, our weary souls restoring ;
And “wakening song of birds ;”—to simple mind,
That doth not baser things too much adore,
Nature lays at his feet all these her wealth.

ADVERSITY.

(AFTER THE GERMAN.)

FAIR smiled the world, unclouded days I spent ;

My heart was much content.

Suddenly rose a vast and gloomy shade :

I shook, and was afraid.

His face was veiled, and I could only mark

His gesture stern and dark.

“Drink !” cried he, and the bitter draught I drank,

Nor did the giver thank.

“Again !” he cried, and held again the bowl :

I drank with murmuring soul.

Pain, trouble, weariness—all these I tasted :

Away the shadow hasted.

His gloomy, fading form I scowled upon,

Though glad that he was gone.

But, as he fled, I saw a glory streaming

Upon his head, and golden pinions gleaming.

VICISSITUDE.

JOY to-day ; perhaps to-morrow
Shall its portion bring of sorrow :
This day we enjoy sweet rest,
The next we are with toil oppressed.
The cares that one day grave our face
The morrow's laughter shall efface.
That weariness we ne'er shall know
That from satiety doth flow.
Life's changes cycle round so fast,
Light and darkness soon are past.
Joy bloometh like most fragile flower,
And grief's the shadow of an hour.
So fleeting, so soon gone, and yet
We dare to laugh, we care to fret.

SONG.

THE sower scattereth o'er the wold
In the winter harsh and cold ;
But, ere summer days are old,
He shall gather sheaves of gold.

The gardener in the garden fair
Bulbs and cuttings here and there
Planteth, and the summer's glare
Shall marvel at the flowers rare.

And we—what is it that we sow ?
Or do we plant at all, or no ?
Shall one golden wheat-ear grow ?
Shall one little blossom blow ?

SONNET XII.

A GIANT oak, whom the full summer heat
At length had warmed through all his ancient frame,
Felt the new life through all his pulses beat ;
And, like some smouldering fire that into flame
Bursts suddenly, and startles the still night,
So burst this forest monster into life.
A thousand little leaflets, green and bright,
From deeply folded buds uncurling came
In the hot golden sunshine glittering ;
And little birds of every kind and name,
In social concert or in friendly strife,
Fill the whole wood with their sweet twittering.
They think that all these leafy bowers were made
Only that they might nestle in the shade.

SONNET XIII.

YOUTH.

THE heart of youth is like some fair blank page
On which the noblest things may be inwrought—
High fancies, tenderest music, precepts sage,
Life-giving thoughts with heavenly burthen fraught :
But, if an evil scribe doth scrawl therein,
It shall show scenes of sorrow, tales of sin ;
If idleness the pen misfinger, age
Cometh, and on his tablets findeth nought.

O youth, be thine own scribe ; with patient hand
Write with all earnestness—life is so short,—
And legibly, that all may understand.
Be thine own master, by thine own soul taught ;
And when Time bids thee close the legend fair,
Honour and truth and love be imaged there !

MARCH.

I COME in like a lion, I bellow, I roar ;
I come leaping in huge strides from shore unto shore :
Through forest, over mountain, in fury I sweep,
And, like a destroyer, I rush o'er the deep.
Mankind's puny navies are toys in my hand :
They scud, they flee from me, they fly for the land.
I joy in my raging, I joy in my speed,
Proud city, haughty tower, I haste by without heed ;
The ostrich, the eagle, I leave far behind,
For my chariot's the tempest, my steed is the wind.
But now, wearied, exhausted, I slacken my pace,
I smooth down the terrors that darken my face,
I smile on earth's flowers, I scarce ripple the sea—
Who would dream one so fierce could so mild ever be ?
Like a child that is weary with riot I am ;
All subdued, meek, and quiet, I go out like a lamb.

MAY.

BRING chaplets of flowers, entwine garlands trim ;
With voices of music sing carol and hymn !
Stern Winter, the cruel, flees swiftly away,
And yields up his sceptre to beauteous Queen May.

For darkness comes splendour, for gloom cometh
mirth ;
The brightness of heaven arrayeth the earth ;
For the tempest May's soft wind delighteth the trees,
Whose young leaves are fluttering gay in the breeze.

A new life enliventh every thing :
'Tis fresh flowers blow, and new songsters that sing ;
And earth, so long dreary and bare, 'gins to wear
A new raiment of loveliness wondrously fair.

Old Winter was strong, and his fetters were grim ;
An enchantress it needed, of might, to quell him ;
But he yieldeth, he melteth, before the soft sway
Of our lady, our princess, our beauteous Queen May !

WIND AND TIDE.

THE sun of May sends forth his ray ;
The country's in its pride :
I would away, but I must stay—
I wait for wind and tide.

The steed is fleet : I hear his feet ;
Forth to the fields they ride ;
But my dull feet must pace the street—
I wait for wind and tide.

In happy bay the shallop gay
Delightsomely doth glide ;
But I to-day no anchor weigh—
I wait for wind and tide.

SONNET XIV.

THE TREE.

'TIS not, O tree, from native strength alone,
Or fostering heat of all the summers' days
That for a hundred years have poured their rays,
That thou to such a majesty hast grown.
A thousand showers thy juicy veins have filled,
A thousand tempests thy huge boughs have tossed ;
New vigour thou hast won from sternest frost,
Whose keenness seemed thy life-blood to have killed.

So we, if sunny paths alone we seek,
And among flowers take our idle ease,
Careful of nothing but our hearts to please,
Shall grow up stunted things, abject and weak ;
We must life's winter know, and brave each storm,
If we with strength and beauty would our souls
inform.

SONNET XV.

A LITTLE lass, a little unkempt lass ;
I see her laughing loud and merrily,
Her long and tangled tresses floating free
In the rough wind that, whistling wild, doth pass.
Her tattered cloak her ragged frock doth show,
But merrily her beaming eyes do glance,
And she delightedly doth sing and dance—
The friendly, blustering breezes please her so.

Her lot shall bring no luxury, no ease,
No feast, no wondrous toys, no fire warm,
Of little dancing friends no happy swarm ;
But Nature is solicitous to please :
Her frost, her hail, her tempests, and her snow
Furnish how many little souls their Christmas show !

SONNET XVI.

WITH steadfast helm sail on, O ship of State !
Proudly and calmly on thy royal track,
Though with wild force conflicting storms attack,
Or rocks surround, or treacherous calms belate.
Here anarchy, irreverence, and scorn,
Restless impatience, and the parrot-cry
Of would-be patriots ; there pride on high
Contemning faults from hallowed freedom born.

Sail on, O freighted with most precious freight !
Our sacred liberties, our home repose,
A composed loyalty, a stern front to foes.
Sail on unwaveringly, O ship of State !
With unrent tackle and with unscathed frame
Pursue thy ancient track along the paths of fame.

*FROM "CHAUCER'S DREME" (SOME-
WHAT MODERNIZED).*

THERE men might hear my lady praised,
And such a fame of her upraised !
What wisdom and what friendliness,
What beauty and what gentleness,
What cheerful and what loving ways,
She had shown through all her days !
Strange it was how every wight
To speak well used all his might.
To her ship, upon the morrow,
In crowds they brought her ; and such sorrow
Seized them as she sailed from view,
Ye would marvel if ye knew.

QUIET THOUGHTS.

As one who, wandering down some quiet lane,
What time the light of day begins to wane,
Feels in his soul the calm of tranquil life
Smoothing the furrows of old cares and strife ;
So I, a quiet path in my own mind
Pursuing, like repose and like contentment find.

I look back on the trouble and turmoil,
The restlessness, the longing, and the toil,
The waywardness, the strife that I have known,
The little love and wisdom I have shown ;
And yet, what gentle hands have led me on,
And safely guided me life's devious paths upon !

Unworthiness with bounteous gift rewarded,
Unheedfulness with tenderest watching guarded,
Unthankfulness only rebuked with blessing,
Unlovingness requited with caressing !
A mind bent ever to revolt and stray,
Yet ever gently turned again the better way !

THE WAYSIDE SPRING.

THE road was long, the sun was hot,
The birds forgot to sing,
When in a sheltered wayside spot
I spied a little spring.

My fevered soul was sere and dry,
And parched and hot my tongue ;
What joy this little spring to spy
The withered leaves among !

From some cool depths the waters sweet
All bubbling did upwell ;
As one that doth an angel meet
I felt the grateful spell.

I stooped and drank, my thirst was gone,
My soul was full of glee,
My face that was so pale and wan
Now ruddy was to see ;

Short seemed the road, I felt no heat,
The birds began to sing,
The world was gay, all nature sweet,
I lovèd everything.

SONG.

WHERE do sweetest flowers bloom ?
In the cotter's little room,
That with fragrance soft they fill,
Basking in the window-sill.

Where doth dwell the sweetest grace ?
In the simple maiden's face,
Whose bright heart, devoid of lore,
With pure love is brimming o'er.

In the halls of hollow state
Many rare things are, and great ;
But in quiet nooks and bowers
Nature plants her dearest flowers.

THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

THE happy warrior is he
That toward himself his spear doth turn,
And biddeth dreams of ill to flee,
And every evil thought doth spurn ;

That doth command to stay within
Every cruel cutting word,
And every new-born budding sin
Loppeth with his flashing sword.

He doth not often idle stand—
A stubborn foe he hath to quell ;
His sword is alway near his hand :
So liveth he and dieth well.

He hath other foeman none,
So calm and pure is his career ;
He looketh, when his work is done,
Heavenward without a fear.

WEBS AND CHAINS.

“ LITTLE thing of tender grace,
With such bright and rosy face,
And such artless childish smile,
How my heart thou dost beguile ! ”

Sunny meads, with daisies pied,
By some sleepy river’s side,
Breathing health and gay delight,
Made this child so rosy bright.

With her plump and dimpled hands,
Lo, she weaveth fairy bands ;
Busy is she, great the pains
She taketh with her daisy chains.

“ How many that, with potent charm,
Have woven web of deadly harm,
Might sigh to see thy simple art,
And envy thee thy infant heart ! ”

FIRESIDE MUSING.

WE are like children dreaming by the fire,
That watch some burning shred in sparks expire.
First goes the bishop with his lawny sleeves,
And then his flock the parson sadly leaves,
Then the old clerk departs with ruddy face,
And, one by one, from the deserted place,
The congregation vanish ; now a shout !
There goes the sexton, now the church is out.

Only that little children with delight
See the sparks vanish up the chimney bright,
While we, with sorrow's pangs and hearts bereft
See our friends gone and empty places left.
But as the feeble sexton, with slow pace,
Unwilling creeps from the familiar place,
So still mine ancient soul to earth doth cleave,
It is most loath its wonted haunts to leave.
Now, little children, murmur not, I pray,
That one old man still lingereth on his way.

PERSEVERANCE.

ON and on the toiling bark
All the day doth go,
On she toileth in the dark,
Her labouring pace is slow.

Heavily laden is the ship
With rich merchandise,
Her plunging bow doth deeply dip
When billows huge arise.

On and on, through calm and storm !
Rest she may not take ;
O'er the vast deep her struggling form
Progress slow doth make.

Few months pass before in port
Weary sails are furled ;
The bark that on so slowly fought
Hath traversed half the world !

O heart, cast away despair!
Fight thou bravely on;
Be the sky or foul or fair
Thy motto still be "On!"

Work patiently still, day by day;
Still some progress make;
Cast despair and fear away
That would the spirit break.

Trust that sometime soon shalt thou
Joyfully look back
With serene and thankful brow
Along a long bright track.

THE RIVER MERSEY.

I OFT have seen thy bounding tide,
This merchant city's life and pride,
Swollen by western tempest's might—
A grand and wildly stirring sight.
In frantic haste, with huge uproar
Thy turgid billows onward pour.
The solid piers of stubborn rock
Hardly front the furious shock,
And vainly moored with cable strong
The battered ships are torn along.

Far oftener, sweeter sight to me,
Thy gently swelling stream I see,
Whose rippling wavelets float along
Jocund to the sailor's song,
And weary ships from ocean's foam
Waft swiftly to their longed-for home ;
And point and pier-head eddy round
With a busy murmuring sound.
Smiles of welcome and good-will
Shores and teeming wharves do fill.

Oh that with such gentle tide
Thou, O soul, mightst ever glide !
In such calm and tempered mood,
Meek and quiet and subdued ;
Full of tenderness and love
To things of earth and things above ;
And 'scape the tempests that are born
Of pride and restless hate and scorn.
Glide softly, innocent of storm and strife,
O soul, along the channels deep of life !

SONG.

YOUTH'S bright halls with flowers are hung,
And pleasures in his path are flung ;
So he crieth, with glad tongue,
"Would I might be ever young!"

But sorrows come, and sorrows go,
And troubles toss us to and fro,
Till it is no grief to know
That each day we older grow.

THE EMPTY BOTTLE.

A LITTLE bottle, bright and green,
Floating down the tide was seen,
A little long-necked bottle tall,
Drifting past the vessels all,
 Upon the dancing stream.

This silly, small-mouthed bottle cried,
“ Lo, now how swiftly down this tide
I cleave my way as with a knife !
Lo ! what energy and life !
 Myself not small I deem.”

And from the banks the little boys
Shouted with applauding noise,
“ Bravo ! skiff of bright green glass,
Oh how swiftly thou dost pass
 Each great lazy bark !”

The ships that, calmly moored, had stayed,
With the flood tide anchor weighed,
And reached their port ; the bottle vain
Was lost upon the boundless main
Among the billows dark.

THE LOVERS' WALK.

DARK sombre silent trees on either hand
Stood frowning, and o'erarching overhead
Made an inwoven web of tracery
Of leaves and delicate twigs, through which the stars,
The curious eyes of heaven, could not pierce ;
But the pale moonshine, in one sea of light
Pouring adown upon that leafy roof,
Forced entry here and there, and, flickering,
Served but to show how dark the darkness was.

Walking with soft pace in that quiet lane,
And whispering in soft words, but full of joy,
Two gentle lovers moved, whose hearts were knit
As closely as their hands, nor needed light
Where happy sunlight lit their inmost souls.
True love, full heart, and spirits all entranced
Ever from glare and turmoil shrink away,
And find their deepest joy in such still shade.

SONG.

EVER, O fairest, be as now !

 Ever a thing of joy and light,
With such lily unseamed brow,
 With a smile so fairy bright.

Youthful traveller that thou art,
 Bound for some most happy clime,
Ever fencèd be thy heart
 From the cold assaults of time.

A lovely bark some gentle gale
 Onward wafts, with dancing prow,
Fair pennon, and ne'er shortened sail ;
 Ever, O fairest, be as now !

SPRING.

ETERNAL freshness fills the happy earth,
She shows no traces of old Time's invading,
The glory she was clothed in at her birth
Is all undimmed, without one sign of fading.

Never green fields, beneath a changeful day,
Did more delighted drink soft April showers ;
And never, grateful for the sun of May,
Did smile and wave their heads more fragrant flowers.

Nor less unchanged the race of mortal man ;
The first men were not more elate and strong
Than those who now traverse their little span,
And the same yearnings through our spirits throng.

Still fresh and young are all our hopes and fears,
Upraising, cheering, chastening or subduing,
Our dreams and teeming fancies, smiles and tears ;
Nature hath such sweet power in renewing.

MUTABILITY.

OVER the fields, on a spring morning,
Shadows and sunbeams course hurrying,
So that the peeping flowerets know
Hardly whether to open or no.

So it is in this world of ours,
Varyings come with the varying hours :
Cheerfulness, hopefulness, sorrowing, woe,
Smilings and tearfulness come and go.

Laughings at eve, and then, without warning,
Cometh a shower of tears in the morning ;
Hardly, again, have our tears time to dry,
When with glad merriment twinkles each eye.

Since, then, joy is a thing of a day,
And sadness never hath long to stay,
Like philosophers, should we not try
Never to laugh and never to cry ?

SONGS.

How many a song that was some poet's pride
Has failed to float adown Time's fatal tide ;
Has had, perchance, its day of fame, and then
Has sunk forgotten by the race of men !

Some float along, they are so sweetly told ;
And some because they sing famed tales of old ;
Some that are sad, because they make us weep ;
Some tranquil ones that sooth the soul to sleep.

Always enough remain the heart to feed,
To comfort and to cheer us in our need ;
Trouble shall toss, and care shall frown in vain
The while resoundeth loud the poet's happy strain.

A WANT.

Of worldly wealth no lack have I ;
I can behold the earth, the sky ;
Mine is the beauteous scene around,
Although another own the ground.

Health have I, my limbs are strong,
With hale steps I march along ;
Me alike the keen east breeze
Or the heats of summer please.

Everything that wished can be
Seemeth ready spread for me ;
Everything seems holiday
In a world bedecked and gay.

Yet while men think me so blest,
One whom fortune hath caressed,
One thing's absence I lament,
That small thing men call Content.

LONG CLOSED.

LONG closed, long closed, O book of wondrous lore,
Now ope, now ope to us thy wondrous store,
And on our souls thy bright enchantment pour !

Dull Earth, dull Earth, so long how canst thou bear
To shut from us thy scenes so passing fair,
Thy flowery visions so divinely fair ?

And art thou waiting for the sun's sweet power
To bid thy wilderness burst into flower,
Thy dreary waste to bloom one beauteous bower ?

Away, cold blasts, and let some milder breeze
Old Winter's bleak embraces quick unfreeze,
And breathe a "leafy gladness" through the trees.

Away, stern Winter, with thy visage hoar !
And let this long-closed book of wondrous lore
On our glad souls its bright enchantment pour.

BY THE SEA.

I SAT by the open casement
When the world was hushed and still,
And the silence of Night, the soother,
Brooded o'er ocean and hill.

A silver beam through the darkness,
A long silver streak on the sea,
Came o'er the waves from night's goddess,
And over the sands to me.

And my little world was too glorious :
I, and the moon, and her beam ;
The pomp of a heavenly vision,
The quiet and peace of a dream !

TO K. L.

How highly favoured hast thou been
By gentle, silver-footed Time,
That like some blooming evergreen
Thou shinest still in golden prime !

Thy fair companions by thy side
With withered leaves the path bestrew,
But thou, in lasting summer pride,
Bloomest in verdure ever new.

I would thou wouldest me, too, teach
How, ever buoyant, ever blithe,
I dazzle might and over-reach
Him of the hourglass and scythe !

YOUTH IN AGE.

PEOPLE may say that old we grow,
Because our heads are touched with snow,
And yet by many a token I know,
Gentle children, it is not so !

Youth's joyous madness hath passed away,
The passions of manhood have lost their sway,
Past is the struggle and heat of the day,
Younger we are though our heads be grey.

For the innocent smiles of childhood fair
Revisit our cheeks, and visions rare
Of a new life, free from all earthly care,
Breathe a youth on our souls that belies our hair.

IN THE TRADES.

SWIFT glides my bark the dancing waves upon,
The sails swell out before the hurrying breeze,
The deep blue sea with crested billows heaves,
Gay porpoises disport about the prow,
Day after day the steadfast wind doth blow,
Day after day our rapid path we cleave.
And we are homeward bound ! What joy and bliss
Are ours, what happy thoughts our bosom fill !
We think not (wherefore should we care to think ?)
What weary calms await us on the line,
What heat, what thirst, what restless discontent !
We think not (wherefore should we think ?) what
storms
Await our heedless ship ere northern climes
Shall see us, way-worn, in their happy ports.
We quaff the genial breeze, we sun us in the sun,
We sing the merry song that befits the homeward
bound,
We watch the beauteous dolphins among the billows
glide,
And proudly and serenely sail our joyous path upon.

CHRISTMAS.

OLD Winter proudly blustered, and shouted out aloud
How he alone bears rule o'er ocean and o'er cloud,
And how he bids the tempests of the northern blasts
to rave

And hurls the boiling billows 'gainst hollow rock and
cave.

“ The earth too is mine own, and that all my power
may know,

I cast a mantle round it of rocky ice and snow.”

Great Christmas heard this boasting, and with a
hearty grace

Shone forth through fog and darkness with his bright
ruddy face,

And such a joy and gladness did every heart up-raise
That all the world burst out into one thrilling song
of praise.

With holly he was decked, and his face was all aglow,
And the folk all danced around him beneath the
mistletoe.

What mighty feasts were spread ! how the wine shone
rich and rare !

How the merry bells they tinkled through the keen
and frosty air !

Old Winter, he looked on, and he saw his reign was
gone,

That a kindlier and a warmer spirit reigned this earth
upon.

AFLOAT.

SWEET is the smell of the white-capped sea,
Sweet is the breath of the ocean to me,
On the deck of my fast-gliding bark I stand
More proudly than e'er on the still dull land.

Hoist topsails ; away, o'er the ocean away !
Cut thy way, dancing prow, through the white dashing
spray.
He must hurry, he must race, who would me over-
take !
Away ! o'er the bows see the merry waves break !

TIME.

HEED not the rolling years !
What have they told ?
Minglings of smiles and tears,
Varying hopes and fears :
Spring with its heart young and glad,
Summer all gold,
Autumn in russet clad,
Stern winter old.

Let the years travel along,
Heed not their song !
Battlings of right and wrong,
Strugglings of mind,
Grief and despair,
Love fair and kind,
Hate black and blind,
Heart-eating care.

Like men that on the deep
The wild waves breast,
We feel the billows sweep
Ever past without a rest,
Trusting only that some day
We shall reach repose,
And in calm and sheltered bay
Our voyage close.

A LITTLE SONG.

“SING me a little song,”
Said my own lady fair,
“Sing me some simple air,
Not very long.

“Let it not tell of sorrow,
Of gloom or dismay ;
Come sunshine to-day,
Sadness to-morrow !

“Let it be sober and grave,
Sedate and discreet,
For it never is meet
To rant and to rave.

“Tax not Memory’s powers,
Let the past be past !
And ever the last
Is the wisest of hours.

“ Not of love sing, I pray ;
'Tis too solemn a theme,
Though some call it a dream ;
Sing of love not to-day.

“ Oh, of Hope do not sing !
His song is too wild,
He is Phantasy's child,
Let him fly with free wing.

“ And, lest evil befall
From an unwise choice,
With thy musical voice
Sing of nothing at all ! ”

SONG.

WE are like the little flowers that perish every day—
We flourish in the sunshine, in the glooming fade
away ;

A frown will make us downcast, a smile will make
us gay,

A single joy uplift us, a single sorrow slay.

O man, unto thy fellows that art of so much might,
That canst turn grief to gladness, or into darkness
light,

Be ever like the sun, a spirit warm and bright ;
Nor come, a cruel shadow, like the cold and baleful
night !

ACTION.

NOT quiet, not repose, not peaceful rest
Afford contentment to the human breast.
Nature loves action. Lo, the travelling sun
Rests not until his daily round be run !
The lovely moon hunts through the starry night ;
The sparkling stars still chase their mistress bright ;
The restless waves hurry along the deep ;
The busy winds for ever onward sweep.
Day follows day, and Time, though old and grey,
Though we would clutch him speedeth on his way.
Action alone, and toil, and busy strife,
To nature and to man breathe joyous life.

SONNET XVII.

ONE saw I ; he was old and he was bent,
But resolute and strong ; what sorrows great,
What heavy strokes of ill had been his fate
I know, and yet he shows no discontent,
And no dismay, but fixed is his estate.
Let fell misfortune all its buffets try,
With steadfast heart he can bear all and wait
For happier days with an unwavering eye:
As on some storm-swept cliff some ancient thorn
Stands out alone beneath the wintry sky,
Defiant, although warped and weather-worn ;
Through its stiff boughs the fierce winds moan and
sigh ;
Small grace, small beauty, hath its stunted form,
But it can face unmoved the blasting winter storm.

SONNET XVIII.

TO THE MOON.

FAIR silver orb, thou lovely queen of night,
That slowly journeyest on thy solemn way,
Streaming upon the world thy tranquil light
That makes night lovelier than the gaudy day !
The sea, the mountains, to thee homage pay,
Thy coming sigh for, and thy going mourn.
Thou art the queen of every elf and fay,
The confidante of every lover lorn !
Thou art the mistress of the poet's dreams !
High 'midst the billowy clouds in pride upborne
Thou ridest on majestic, and thy beams
Lovingly pourest down on grove and lawn,
Mountain and vale, and on a thousand streams,
Till the whole glittering world thy tributary seems.

DELIGHTS.

LET the old folk delight in their rubber
And the children in romps and a dance,
Let those lovers ensconced in a corner
Be happy in love's beaming glance ;

But for me, if I follow my humour,
When I wish to be merry and gay
I draw my old chair to the fire,
And take up some old poet's lay.

There wisdom, concealed in quaint fable,
And truth and content I can find,
And with quiet delight I drink in
The music that charmeth my mind.

And perchance the old master will waken
Some chord in the depths of my heart,
And, following afar off, I, happy,
May borrow a part of his art.

THE WRITER TO HIS PEN.

FEAR not, O pen, thy busy path to trace;
One faithful reader I dare promise thee,
One ever ready with a smiling face,
One never weary thy neat foot-marks to see.

What though the learned thy simple lays despise,
What though the worldly thy simple lessons scorn,
One, I can promise, shall read with loving eyes,
Joy with thy joy, and weep when thou dost mourn.

Poor though thy art be, to him thou art delight,
Oft he will read thee, and love thee all the more.
Fear not, O pen, whatever thou mayest write
One happy reader o'er thy lines shall pore.

WET.

FAIR maid, that tripp'st so lightly o'er the heather,
Ah ! what is weather ?

That smile, so sweetly simple, to descry,
Who'd mind the sky ?

One friendly touch of that fair hand to get,
Who'd not get wet ?

One potent word with whispering breath to utter,
Who'd heed the gutter ?

Who would not kneel such princess fair to please,
Though damp his knees ?

Devotion's steadfast flame shall ne'er be quenched
Thou_oh onc gets drenched.

He who sees sunbeams in his mistress' eyes
Doth mud despise ;

And when chivalric duty doth require,
Marches through mire.

To her his faith, his life, his all he owes,
Much more his clothes.

He ever cherish must affection fond
E'en in a pond.

Such happy ties no earthly power must break,
Not even a lake.

True lovers, buoyed with love, would happy be
E'en in the sea.

THE LADY OF CATHAY.

ON a damask-coloured floor
Sat the lady I adore ;
Beauteous maidens all around
Bloomed like roses on the ground.
I entered, but she merely rang
 Her karrawang.

I knelt me down her face before,
The face I do adore,
And to the lady of Cathay
Most piteous things I 'gan to say ;
In vain, for she did simply bang
 Her karrawang.

“ O lovely lady of Cathay,
Thy wrath, I pray thee, turn away ;
O fairest in this land of tea,
As loveliest, so most gentle be ! ”
And she—why, at my head she flang
 Her karrawang.

THE HAND.

I TOOK that hand, but I was not elated,
I did not dream, my thoughts were not belated ;
I did not sigh, I had no cause to smile ;
I raised it up, I pored o'er it awhile,
I pressed it to, I closed it, gazed around,
Said nothing, frowned, and softly laid it down.
It was a fair hand, wherefore did I frown ?
Had I no heart ? It was too true, but list !
The hand I played with was a hand at whist.

WORK.

WORK, work, while it is light,
Or else when cometh night
No rest shall thee requite.

Toil, toil ! while youth is here,
Else think what evil cheer
Hath thine old age to fear.

Such cares shouldst thou despise,
Yet think of Honour's prize
That in toil's pathway lies.

Work on, and have no fear !
Though dark thy way and drear,
Somewhere the sun is near.

Forward, through mist and cloud !
Forward, with banner proud,
Forward ! with carol loud.

There is no sea so vast
But patient toil at last
Its wastes hath overpast.

There is no mountain dread
Whose cloud-enveloped head
Ne'er hath known mortal tread.

By little steps, and slow,
Toil's patient feet may go,
Yet leave the world below !

Where hand of toil hath been,
Fields smiling, bright and green,
And flowers rare are seen.

Where idleness goes by,
Blight on the ground doth lie,
Fair flowers fade and die.

'Midst labour's sun-burnt band
If thou dost choose to stand,
Happy thy youth, and grand !

IRON.

IRON is master in this world of strife,
And gold and silver own it for their lord.
It feedeth, or it sternly endeth life ;
It makes the plough, it makes the sword.

FISHING.

LIKE patient fisherman, whose little boat
Upon the billows lightsomely doth float,
I placidly in quiet patience wait,
Trusting some silly fish may take my bait.

Herring, or mackarel, or snaky eel
He hopes to capture with his barbèd steel ;
Why should my hopes extravagant appear ?
I'm only fishing for a new idea !

LOVE'S HAUNTS.

THE shores whereon the gentlest ripples play,
The groves sequestered from the light of day,
The meads bespangled with the flowers of May,—
These are the scenes where Love delights to stray.

The waves are pleased to pour their music sweet,
The groves are charmed to be her loved retreat,
Flowers bloom the brightest ever round her feet,
May with her choicest smiles delighteth Love to greet.

A CHILD.

IN MEMORIAM.

LAY her in her little bed ;
A wreath of flowers above her head.
She a flower was like them—
Now her fitting diadem.

She so fresh, so pure, so gay,
Like a flower hath passed away :
Lay them on her ; by and by
She shall blossom--they must die !

A STORM.

HURRY, O wind on thy way !
Tear from the waves their spray,
Rend the sere leaves from the tree
And away on thy wild path flee !

At the sound of thy blast I rejoice,
At the music stern of thy voice ;
Thou seemest to breathe, with thy trumpets shrill,
Freedom, and strength, and a mighty will !

A SKETCH.

IT was a quiet place where artists came
To pencil Nature's secrets : hidden glens,
A waterfall whose music filled the air,
A stream half hid by willows, and, retired
From view, an ancient ruinous church,
And old churchyard, around whose mouldering walls
The river, here a deep calm-flowing stream,
Peacefully wound among its sheltering trees
Themselves a portraiture of reverend age.

FOOD.

GOLD feedeth not our hunger,
We thirst, but not for wine ;
The cates our spirits sigh for
Are something more divine.

We live on smiles and kindness,
On tender deed and word :
A look, a sigh of fondness,
By these our hearts are stirred,

By these our hearts are nourished,
By these our souls are fed ;
Without them we are famished,
They are our wine and bread.

A TEMPEST.

WHAT art thou like, O wind !—stormy battalions
Scenting the battle, and rushing down from some
mountain
The foeman to crush like an avalanche, fierce, irresist-
ible ?

What art thou like, O wind !—legions of sea-birds,
Startled from pinnacled rocks, and scudding in terror
Hither and thither over the turbulent billows,
Wildly screaming, with ceaseless flutter of pinions ?
All that is swift and mighty, fierce and resistless,
Loud and dread in its raging, thou dost resemble,
Only to make it seem mild and gentle beside thee.

CHRISTMAS SNOW.

GENTLY and noiselessly falleth the snow on the earth,
Peacefully, silently, still an unceasing downfall,
Till in a raiment white, delicate, lovely,
Wrapped is the world, and the chaste and silvery
 moon

Looks down on another self, so pure and so glittering.
Season of joy, if likewise our souls sin-troubled
Now can be clothed in a raiment so fair and so glo-
 rious,
Spotless, pure, and bright, that shall rival in radiance
Snow-clad hill and valley, and moon that illuminates
 them.

SONG.

As some mountain blast
That, forth rushing fast,
O'er a lake hath passed ;

The waters do awake,
Into fierce billows break
That all the islets shake.

Soon hath the wild wind gone,
But the vexed lake upon
Long the waves wander on.

Such is sorrow's pain,
Vexing long the brain
Ever and again.

THE DAISY AND THE CHILD.

As the sun began to fade,
Making way for evening shade,
Every little daisy white
Folded up her petals light.

And a little curious child,
Among the pastures wandering wild,
Asked them what they did it for
When they looked so nice before.

A little daisy answer made :
" Light is sweetest after shade ;
We should not be half so bright
If we did not sleep all night.

" The night winds are dank and cold,
So we snugly us enfold ;
And, little damsel, thou hadst best
Hie thee home to thy warm nest."

PATER NOSTER.

I SAW a little spoileèd boy,
His mother's very life and joy,
Pet and fret and fume and toy,
All his might use to annoy,
But could cause her no offence,
For her love is so intense.

Such, I said, is mortal man,
Who e'er doeth all he can,
So spoiled is he, to offend
Him who doth all blessings send
And from every ill doth fend,
More than parent doth befriend
From life's daybreak to its cnd.

LIGHT-HEARTED.

LIGHT-hearted ! Years have passed and left thee
still

Light-hearted, merry as some mountain rill,
That all the scene with happiness doth fill.

Sorrows have touched thee, but no trace they show,
Or only such as when untimely snow
Quick-melting shows the lovelier green below.

Dance still, glad spirit, through this transient vale ;
With silken banners streaming, gladly sail,
If any prayer of mine can waft thee favouring gale !

TRIFLING GIFTS.

SOME most trifling gift on me,
From thy precious treasury,
Deign, O lady, to bestow ;
All their richness well I know.
Let it be some gentle word
By mine ear delighted heard ;
Let it be some simple smile
My charmed spirit to beguile.
Trifling gifts for thee to give,
To me feasts on which I live.

THE WEST WIND.

SOMETHING softly in the vale,
Sheltered by the mountains grand,
But chilled so long by Winter's hand,
Pipeth ; 'tis the western gale.

'Tis the gentle western wind,
Coming, from the ocean wild,
With her fingers soft and mild,
Winter's fetters to unbind.

Nothing, as she on doth pass,
Heedless of her touch doth stand :
Bare twigs bud beneath her hand,
Gaily springs the crispèd grass.

The little streamlet that so long
Hath shone with cold and icy face,
Remembereth all its summer grace,
And danceth on with impulse strong.

Such strange happiness doth bring
To all nature this sweet wind,
Whose own welcome breath is kind,
And who harbingers the Spring.

WAR.

BRAVE it is when warrior band,
Waging battle for the right,
Forth in glittering steel doth stand,
In resistless phalanx bright.
Only one thing is more grand—
When their arms have won the fight,
And their hearts are proud and light,
Then to stretch forth Mercy's hand,
Then to spare the ravaged land.
Then is shown the hero's might,
Though no fiery sword do wave ;
Not more glorious, to the brave,
Is to conquer than to save.

SONNET XIX.

O GENTLE Time, that onward so dost steal,
So stilly and so tranquilly dost tread,
A shadow, loath his features to reveal,
That noiseless flitteth by, with downcast head,
How know we thou art here, and by what sign ?
Thy soft hands play so gently on each face,
With so much love and fingering benign,
That where growth endeth and begins decay,
And whether change at all hath taken place,
We are enamoured so we cannot say ;
And if, by chance, thy handiwork we trace,
We would not for the world thy work delay.
Thy tender steps out-tread the stamps of sorrow,
And for a tear to-day, thou shovest a smile to-morrow.

SONNET XX.

WATCHING a gallant ship that glided past,
Her broad sails, swollen with the hurrying wind,
Dragging with mighty power each tapering mast,
As bent to leave the wind itself behind ;
I said, “ Great stems, that branches bear so grand,
This is a second life that ye enjoy,
That wont on rugged mountain-side to stand,
When these same restless breezes loved to toy
With your cone-covered boughs ; surely kind fate
Hath loved ye well, that after jocund days,
Spent sociably begirt by many a mate,
By songsters warbled to in gladsome lays,
Ye now go gaily roving, bold and free,
Wherever rolls the earth-encircling sea.”

SONNET XXI.

ON A LANDSCAPE.

AN undisturbèd lake, whose rising banks
Are clothed with foliage fresh from Spring's young
hand,
The centre makes ; far off, in distant ranks,
Blue misty towering mountains gloomy stand.
Here, in the foreground, placid cattle wade
Knee-deep in the clear tranquil waters still,
In which, skies, trees, and crags are so displayed
A thousand colours seem the depths to fill.
Along a path that near the lake-side winds,
A little basket-laden girl doth go,
And still some flower or tempting pebble finds,
And therefore is her lingering pace so slow ;
A simple loiterer, yet hath she skill
With life and human joy that picture fair to fill.

SONNET XXII.

I PASSED a grove in which the birds were singing
Loud songs of love, and gaiety and bliss,
To the glad air their tuneful notes forth flinging ;
I passed again, but did the music miss,
No breath of melody the air retained.

How otherwise with uttered song of ours !
Once sung, for ever through our memories ringing,
In strong and glorious voices high sustained,
Telling of love and her celestial powers,
Of knightly valour with unstainèd shield,
Of smiling innocence girt with May flowers,
Of fortitude that doth disdain to yield,
Of patient suffering, of righted wrong,
And all the highest things that may be spoke in song.

SONNET XXIII.

He was a rugged man of stormy make,
And like the turbulent tempestuous wind,
That loves the tall pines of the hills to shake,
And leaves a rustling its wild track behind ;
So stalked he through the world, a man of might,
Strong-limbed, strong-minded, clearing his own path,
Walking strait onward whether wrong or right,
Shouldering hindrances away with wrath.
While she was like a little purling brook,
That sweetly singeth ever its low song ;
With natural gladness and bright sunny look
She passed delightsomely life's ways along ;
And she that loudness and that strength did love,
And he her gentleness, all things above.

SONNET XXIV.

TO THE ISLE OF MAN.

GREEN hills, where purest breezes love to roam ;
Secluded glens, the haunt of murmuring streams
And care-worn lovers lost in pensive dreams ;
Huge iron rocks lashed by the ocean's foam,
Pinnacled crags, the restless sea-bird's home ;
Sweet sheltered bays, whose banks the crystal sea,
Wondering to be so still, with gentle glee
Kisseth with ripples ; skiff and shallop gay,
Skimming along, or idling on their way
In happiest idleness ; and idle we,
Placid spectators much content to be,
And happy with the sight of scene so fair
And various, we Nature's calmness share,
And pour forth tranquil lays, O sweet green isle, to
thee !

SONNET XXV.

LLANFAIRFECHAN.

O LOVELY vale, sequestered and serene,
Where chilling eastern blasts no entry find,
But gentle zephyrs ever warm and kind
Breathe health and gladness o'er thy pastures green !
With many a bend thy sparkling streamlets wind,
The fairest flowers on every bank are seen,
Proud towering mountains shelter thee behind,
In front the beauteous sea completes the scene.
New charms, with every varying light and shade,
Thy groves, thy streams, thy flowery meads reveal ;
A placid gladness o'er my soul doth steal
And every anxious care away doth fade.
Such power, fair valley, hast thou to impart
Thy calm, thy health, thy joy to the vexed human
heart.

ANTIGONE.

TREMBLING, ah me! my haughty courage fled,
I tread the last sad path of mortal man ;
Trembling, I see the cruel cave await me
Whose gloomy depths must hold me till I pass
To those drear lands no living breath doth bless ;
I, that so many sorrows have beheld,
I, the last sufferer of a suffering race !
O men of Thebes, lament and weep for me !
Tears for distress the manly spirit grace.
O maidens ! weep that one of your own selves
Should perish thus in dismal rock enshrouded,
Buried in darkness. Ah, no tenderness
In those unfeeling eyes hath dwelling-place !
Unwept then, and uncared for, and forlorn,
I pass on to my desolate abode,
Prepared the gloomy shades of death to meet.

Father of days, that through the vaulted skies,
Radiant in glory, travellest evermore,
Farewell ! for on this wretched maid again
Never shall beam of happy sunlight fall.

And Hæmon, thou beloved ! my soul's dear sun,
Alas, farewell ! for never bridal wreath
Shall this poor head adorn. Not to the dead
Do the bright maidens chaunt the bridal hymn.
Loved son of fatal father who doth rob
Me, thy betrothed, not only of those rites
That grace the smiling marriage festival,
But even of pious dues and welcome death,
Decreeing deadly life in hateful cave !

No earthly comfort comes my soul to cheer,
Yet happy thoughts from other worlds arise.
Pride and delight chase gloom and fear away !
Pleasing, I know, to the high gods above,
The deathless deed I did, and sweet to ye,
O parents, happy where no sorrow comes
And all past woes in Lethe still lie hid.
And thou, O Polynices, brother dear !
Whose poor remains to birds and prowling wolves
I scorned to leave a prey, I see thee beckon,
And hear thee call me to those blessed realms
Where filial love is grateful, not abhorred.
Then welcome, darksome cave ! for well I feel
Daylight celestial will not tarry long.

OG YGLA.

I KNOW not if this really be an isle,
Or phantom fabric springing from the sea ;
And these green meadows, with their sunny smile,
I know not whether earthly meads they be ;
But not a flower or shrub or stately tree
That dwell in any land beneath the sky
But on this lovely island flourish free,
The palm-tree waves abroad its branches high
And with the ancient oak in majesty doth vie.

I do believe that in high heaven's bowers
The immortal amaranth can not excel,
Nor asphodel, nor fairest heavenly flowers,
The rose that 'midst our earthly paths doth dwell ;
Nor can the fragrant thyme more sweetly smell
That crowns the summit of the sacred hill
Than that which springs on every earthly fell ;
Nor purer water purl through heavenly rill
Than doth our bubbling earthly crystal fountains fill.

Therefore, although this island is so fair
And every herb that on earth's face doth blow
With such surpassing beauty bloometh there,
While wondrous sparkling streamlets wandering go,
And all the rocks with sheen of diamonds glow,
And birds are singing there of every kind,
I know not whether it be earth or no ;
But greater beauty never, to my mind,
Than Nature spreadeth here shall ever spirit find.

But lo, the face of man ! Lo, on those sands,
Gazing across the interminable sea,
Hands clasped, a man with grief o'erburthened stands.
A mortal in that isle, if isle it be !
A man of care and wrinkled brow is he ;
A wanderer, tormented by the fates,
And from their vengeful arrows never free ;
One whom how many a cruel toil awaits
Ere he shall dwell at peace within his palace gates !

Gazing across the interminable deep
He groaned and pierced afar with yearning eyes,
Deep-sunk sad eyes that were too sad to weep ;
Then, " Ah, most cruel dreary waste," he cries,
" I watch thy sullen waters ebb and rise,

And morn and eve I linger by thy side ;
But thou art callous to my weary sighs,
And bring'st no bark upon thine idle tide,
To bear my widowed heart to my bereavèd bride.

“ Ah, sea, take pity on my sorrowing soul !
Ah, hither waft some pinnace, I implore !
So may in peace thy happy billows roll
For ever, free from Northern tempests’ roar,
And may the zephyrs kiss thee evermore,
Bright dolphins ’midst thy gentle wavelets play,
Glad sea-birds ever skim thy crestlets hoar,
Great Phœbus gild thee with his fairest ray,
And pleasure ever make with thee his gladsome
stay ! ”

In vain ! The sea in angry waves arose,
Cold winds around the island ’gan to howl,
Groaneth the strand beneath the billows’ blows,
The face of heaven becomes obscured and foul,
All Nature on the hapless man doth scowl,
All Nature joins his spirits to depress,
Screecheth with shrilly screech the boding owl ;
The lovely isle doth seem some wilderness,
And gloom and horrid dread the hero’s soul distress.

“ Fair as a goddess, and of grace divine ! ”

Such deem we highest praise of woman-kind :
How dare I utter, then, this thought of mine—
That peradventure to celestial mind
Delightsome woman, radiant and kind,
Is type and image of most choice delight,
And when they would show grace with godhead
twined

They woman make themselves to outward sight
Whom surely to excel doth pass their power quite.

So, if I by her beauty judged alone,
The nature of this nymph I could not tell ;
And if she earthly parentage doth own,
This nymph, or maid, who on this isle doth dwell.
Here hath she framed herself a fairy cell
Which she illumeth with her starry eyes ;
She hath a voice is like a silver bell ;
She singeth while her busy loom she plies,
Her silver voice peals forth and thrills the vaulted
skies.

She from her shady bowers issuing out,
Moved sweetly toward the soul-tormented man,

And frisking fawns and lambs her path about
In great delight and frolic gladness ran.
Seeing her lovely face, the waves began
To smooth their angry backs, and the fierce wind,
To softness hushed, her brow 'gan gently fan.
Pacing the beach she doth the wanderer find
Still murmuring 'gainst the fates in his deep-pondering
mind.

“ O thou ! ” she cried, “ wisest of mortal-kind,
Why strivest thou against celestial might ?
Why are thine eyes to heavenly omens blind,
That can all earthly knowledge read aright ?
Once more I would thy weary heart invite
To leave the shades of trouble and regret
For sunny realms of unalloyed delight,
Wouldst thou thy rocky island but forget !
Gather the roses thou on this fair isle hast met ! ”

He answer made, “ Ah, goddess, lady fair,
Thou com’st once more to mock me in my grief,
That art the very cause of my despair !
But yesterday I looked for glad relief,
And lo, to-day am mocked beyond belief !

Thou bad'st me build myself a shallop small,
And promised favouring winds and voyage brief,
And let me lop thy blooming fir-trees tall,
And with a bounding heart I saw the forest fall.

“ I laid my shallop's keel hard by the strand,
Sheltered by willows from the fervid sun ;
I framed her curvèd ribs with skilful hand,
Then rested, half my happy labour done ;
Ah, work of hope that wast so well begun !
Then the lithe planks along the frame I laid,
And with firm bolts I fastened every one.
Then wrought I ashen oars with feathery blade,
And by thy magic help a silken sail I made.

“ And so, my world-worn heart proud with delight,
I made oblation to the immortal powers,
And rested in sweet slumbers all the night ;
And when the morning oped the golden hours,
And Phœbus made to smile the meads and flowers,
I hastened thee to thank and bid adieu ;
Already Ithaca's loved hills and towers
Seemed near approaching to my sanguine view,
Her mermaid-haunted rocks and meads of verdant
hue.

“Ah, heart so oft deceived, so trustful still !
My phantom bark was nowhere to be seen ;
Each tree I’d felled its ancient place did fill,
Clothed, as before, in leafy mantle green ;
Gay laughing parrots from the boughs did lean,
And mocked and twitted me in my despair,
And loathsome serpents crept the trees between,
And with green baleful eyes did on me glare,
As if thy cruel triumph those abhorred did share.”

“It was my love, O Ithacus !” she cried,
“ ’Gainst which I strove so oft, but strove in vain,
That would not let thee wander from my side,
But in this isle my hero did detain.
My very heart seemed fleeing o’er the main !
Thee absent, what were godhead, what were life ?
I loathed mine island and my lonely reign.
Ah, loved one ! why give up thy soul to strife ?
Make this thine Ithaca, and me thy blooming wife !

“Now listen, thou whom men esteem so wise !
Hearken to one whose soul is wrapped in thee,
And this her precious offer not despise !
Remain, and share immortal life with me :
From Death’s cold hand thou shalt be ever free ;

No pain, no fading, nothing of decay,
No weary feebleness thou e'er shalt see ;
All life shall ever be to thee a summer day,
And thou shalt ever bloom like some fair flower of
May !

“ The wisdom of the Gods shall fill thy soul,
And on divine ambrosia shalt thou feed
And nectar sip from Hebe’s golden bowl.
Thou shalt be king of every fertile mead,
And every law by thy sage mind decreed
Shall by our nymphs and satyrs be obeyed ;
Glad hecatombs to our new god shall bleed.
Thou shalt be shepherd here, I rural maid,
And joy shall sport and dance in every smiling
glade ! ”

Sadly Lacrites’ careworn son replied,
“ Alas ! Enchantress, rather let me go !
Ah, let me waft me o’er the ocean tide,
Or else all life is misery and woe !
Death seems my only friend, and life my foe,
Now wherefore bid such foe for ever reign ?
Ah ! Love me, fairest nymph, and let me go !

What love is this me captive to restrain ?
Yearneth my heart to pass across the azure main :

“ It craveth sorely for its mortal love,
 Longeth my soul for no celestial fare ;
Nothing, to me, so delicate and rare
 Blooms in the everlasting halls above
 As in my barren island I might share
With her who sitteth weeping desolate,
 Who is my partner only in despair,
Who sitteth weeping in her widowed state,
And pours, as I do, prayers forth to unpitying Fate.”

THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE RAIN.

I SAW one rainy day a girl
Going slowly to school,
Tossing her many-curlèd head,
And looking calm and cool.

The rain was pouring down in floods,
The gutter was a stream,
And yet she loitered calm and cool
Like one that's in a dream.

I said, " Ah, happy days of youth !
That fear no ills,
Nor think upon the thousand pains
That follow chills.

" Colds, influenzas, rheumatism,
She dreams not of,
Lumbago, ague, dread decline
With weary cough.

“For want of thought she may be lost
Ere prime of life.
Ah well, she leaves a cruel school,
And care, and strife !”

I thought I saw her, pale and wan,
Stretched on her bed,
Tossing, but now in fretful pain,
Her many-curlèd head ;

Mourning she had so careless been,
Despising rain,
Thinking the fury of the skies
A power vain.

I could no more, but seized my hat
And rushed across the way ;
“O little maiden, come with me,
This is a dreadful day !

“Come, and take shelter from the storm
Beneath my friendly roof !”
She smiled, and said, “Good sir, my cloak
And hood are waterproof.”

THE MERCHANT.

IN olden times a bark one day,
 In the Greek seas careering,
Making 'gainst adverse winds slow way,
 Towards Naxos' isle was steering.

Dark swarthy men the oars did ply,
 And stern they looked and scowling ;
The day was cold, and wild the sky,
 And the wintry wind was howling.

One passenger there was on board,
 He seemed a merchant wealthy ;
Full plump he looked, his back was broad,
 His eyes were small and stealthy.

His robe was rich, and at his belt
 A leather purse was hanging ;
The rolling of the boat it felt :
 They heard the money clanging !

The rowers heard the money clang,
With hungry ears they listen ;
Like golden bells it sweetly rang,
Their hungry eyes they glisten.

Slowly the little vessel sped,
The rowers scarcely stirred her ;
The caitiff captain nothing said,
But scowling looked like murder.

He made a sign, her course they veered,
The wind came on the quarter,
For Asia's sandy coast they steered,
Across the bubbling water.

The merchant cried, " Why veerest thou ?
What fearest thou, O master ? "

The silent captain knit his brow,
The rowers rowed the faster.

Why they should make for Asia's strand
They did not care to tell him ;
They meant to rob, and in that land
To slavery would sell him.

With favouring wind, o'er rolling seas
The little bark is flying ;
The villain master takes his ease,
The men their oars are plying.

The merchant shook his leather bag,
The gold began to tinkle ;
His plump round head began to wag,
His little eyes to twinkle.

And suddenly a mighty sound
Of flutes and voices singing,
On every side, the ship around,
Wild melody came bringing ;

The mast and oars began to shine
With serpent-scales all golden ;
Up the ship's sides began to twine
Green ivy leaves unfolden.

The sound of flutes was wild and loud ;
And to the music dancing,
Satyrs and fauns, in endless crowd,
Up on the deck came prancing !

And where the merchant plump had stood
A lion huge was roaring,
With flaming breath and eyes of blood
Vials of wrath outpouring.

Wild panic seized the traitor crew,
All leap into the ocean ;
Transformed, they show the dolphin's hue
And swim with gentle motion.

All this was in the olden time,
When gods of earth were fonder,
And jovial Bacchus, in his prime,
Upon our globe did wander.

THE MINSTREL.

Of youth and love no longer
The ancient minstrel sang ;
No more with war and glory
His clanging harp-strings rang.

His limbs were gaunt and feeble,
And pale and wan his face ;
His hair that once was golden
Swept down in silvery grace.

Forth to the castle pleasaunce,
A fresh and flowery mead,
One sunny morn in spring-time
His tottering steps they lead.

His eyes, though dim, yet wandered
O'er hill and vale and stream,
A landscape wide and stately,
Lit up by May's fair beam.

Joy stirred the old man's spirit
His harp he bade them bring ;
With softest touch he touched it,
With gentlest voice 'gan sing :—

“I bless ye, smiling meadows,
Lit up by May's sweet sun ;
I bless ye, shining rivers
That 'mid her flowers run !

“I bless thee, happy sunlight,
That shineth forth so gay ;
Ye blithsome lambs, I bless ye,
That in the pastures play !

“And thee, thou noble castle,
Where minstrel oft hath sung,
While hall and ivied towers
With sweet applause have rung !

“Hail to ye, lords and ladies !
With many a glance and smile,
Full often did your gentleness
The minstrel's heart beguile.

“ High fame in joust and tourney,
Renown in love and war,
The cup of joy at feastings,
May heaven upon ye pour !

“ I bless thee, earth, our parent !
I bless thee, heaven, above,
Who on thy children showereth
All joy, all peace, all love ! ”

The minstrel ceased, and sadly
The soft low echoes rang,
As though they knew his last song
The dying minstrel sang.

THE MILL.

A KING once lived whom Fortune
Drove from his throne away,
Fortune that still the highest
Chooses for her mad play.

The subjects of his kingdom,
Stirred up with discontent,
Had risen in hasty tumult,
And he to exile went.

And in a stranger country,
Remote from court and pride,
He in a mill found refuge
By a fair river's side.

Now he, a portly miller,
No subjects hath to curb,
No cares of high ambition
His slumbers sweet disturb.

The queen, in like contentment,
Sings to him all the day,
And by the river margin
The miller's children play.

What joy such peace and safety,
Such tranquil mind to feel,
To know no revolution
Save the turning of the wheel !

But lo, one summer morning
There came a humble train,
His former subjects, suing
For his return again.

They carried crown and sceptre,
And sued on bended knee,
And prayed for his forgiveness,
And dutious vowed to be.

He answered, " I'm a miller,—
'Twould be a wondrous thing
For one that is a miller
To wish to be a king !

“ To lose this sunny freedom,
To lose my slumbers sound,
And in a golden fetter
Of pomp and care be bound.

“ Thrones flourish and thrones totter,
But men must still be fed ;
Men tire of their princes,
But never of their bread.

“ The river frets and murmurs
But ever steadily flows,
And day and night unwearied
The mill-wheel merrily goes.” *

* This little poem is founded on one on the same subject by G. Nadaud.

CAMBYES.

CAMBYES, king of Persia, mighty lord,
Triumphant sat elate at festive board.
Before him lay his cross-bow and his sword,
This prince of deed renowned and doughty word.

“ Fill high the bowl, companions of my fame,
Who swept through Egypt like resistless flame ; *
Drink to our own sublime immortal name !
Drink to our conquered foes’ eternal shame ! ”

The ruby wine right merrily did flow,
The monarch’s face of pride like fire did glow ;
Now laughter loud, now heavy-handed blow,
The maddening goblet’s influence did show.

Then rose up, stately, gentle and serene,
An aged counsellor of reverend mien,
“ Thy hand is strong, O king, thy years are green,
Oh deign from voice of age some truth to glean !

* He had just returned from conquering Egypt.

“ Strong drink is death, it maketh power weak,
For merry laugh it bringeth dismal shriek,
And most on kings it doth its wild wrath wreak,
And changeth kingly deed to wanton freak.

“ Now, like a hero, awful he doth stand,
Wielding the dreaded sword with potent hand ;
Now sinketh without strength, unnerved, unmanned,
A thing of shame and trouble to the land.

“ From thy keen eye the poisonous wine all sight
Shall ravish, from thy sinewy limbs all might,
And from thy soul the sacred inner light,
By maddening fumes assailed, shall take its flight.”

He ceased ; rage seized the fiery monarch’s soul,
On the old man his angry eyeballs rolled :
“ Who dares to-day the conqueror to control ?
Again, again fill high the flowing bowl !”

The cup went round and round, the mirth was wild ;
The wrathful king, dissembling, softly smiled,
And to the old man said, in accents mild,
“ Bring hither to the feast thy fair young child.”

The boy appeared, and as he stood apart,
With well-poised cross-bow and unerring art
The cruel monarch shot him through the heart ;
No wavering was there in that deadly dart.

“ Ho, greybeard ! that dared prate in evil hour,
Have these eyes lost their sight, these limbs their
power ? ”

The old man nothing heard, but down did cower,
Where faded lay, and dead, his heart’s dear flower.

THE CHOICE OF HERCULES.

ON a bank of waving grass,
Shaded overhead by boughs
A youth of mould heroic sat
Lost in pensive reverie.
Before him lay life's mysteries,
Behind him childhood's happy hours.
The past, in many a smiling thought
And dream by memory brought back,
Filled him with a tranquil joy ;
But when the future, all concealed,
'Neath Time's gloomy mantle hidden,
Seized upon his wandering thoughts
He felt his ardent soul dilate,
Filled with aspirations high
And eager with half-formed desires
And conscious of heroic powers,
But dubious of the path obscure
Unsettled how his life to plan.

A sudden vision made him start
And brushed his floating dreams away.
Two women of majestic port,
Taller than earth's daughters fair,
Before him stood and smiled on him ;
And one cried, " Come with me !" and pointed
Down a wide and even path,
Shaded by most noble trees,
Carpeted by fragrant flowers
And soft velvet mosses green ;
And by it flowed refreshing streams
On whose banks were dancing seen
Merry nymphs and satyrs gay
And ivy-crownèd bacchanals.
The merry monarch in the midst
Reigned o'er the revelries,
And hornèd Pan, with cloven hoof,
The sweetest sounds from rural flute
Poured, and led the merry throng.

The youth beheld the joyous scene,
And on that lovely lady gazed
That was full buxom to behold.
The early prime of womanhood

Gave beauty to her graceful form ;
Love's fires sparkled in her eyes ;
In wild loose tresses her rich hair
Adown her pearly shoulders fell,
And on her brow the lily bloomed
And in her cheek the rose.
In artful negligence arrayed,
Her gauzy garments floated loose.
Smiling, she said again,

“ Come with me !

Lo, how delightful are these sunny meads !
Youth is the merry season of our life,
Unmeet to be bowed down by grisly care.
To all who follow me the inspiring dance,
The enchanting eyes of beauty, the wild muse
That fills the trembling ether with delight,
And all the bliss the rosy god doth pour
Whose nectar lifts the soul from troubled earth
To realms of golden dreams, are never wanting.

“ Let the dull slaves whose menial lot hath bound
Their natures to the servitude of toil
Burrow their native earth for gold, or sow
Its ploughed-up surface for its meagre gifts,

Won painfully ; or with patient oar explore
The dangerous paths of ocean, constant toil
And constant trouble leading to no rest
But still to toil and trouble. Come with me !
Thou art a prince I know, and royal joy
Awaits thee. Nothing pleasing to the sight,
Nor of sweet sound, nor grateful to the taste
But I will bring thee. Every solemn thought
Or sense of care shall fly far off ; around thee
Joy and delight and ecstasy shall hover.
Lo ! how my maidens beckon ; come with me ! ”

The youth that never from her face
Had turned, and would have listened mute
For ever gladly to her voice
Of music, her fair proffered hand
Was hurrying to take, when she,
That other statelier one, said gravely,
“ The siren voice of Pleasure on the ear
Of youth doth softly fall and gratefully,
And voice of Truth is often harsh and cold ;
Yet listen, think and ponder, then make choice.”
Her solemn tones restrained the youth
Who glanced towards those merry meads,

And felt the magic of Pan's flute,
Yet turned to listen to this queen—
For such her voice and gesture showed.

She wanted that bewitching smile
That graced bright Pleasure's glowing face,
Her look was lordly and serene,
Her brow was calm, and clear, and high ;
Her step as of some mountain maid,
Health's ruddy hue her cheeks adorned.
Her port erect and resolute
Spoke decision and command,
Yet maiden grace and kindness
Shone in every word and look.
Simple and modest was her garb
Yet showing dainty handiwork.

Toward a narrow tangled path,
With brambles and sharp briars begirt
And leading over rugged hills
Further than the eye could see,
Still upward, ever higher, she pointed.

“ Who journeyeth with virtue,” said this queen,
“ Disdains in lap of luxury to lie,

Disdains deceitful smiles and false delights
And, more than all, the sway of hateful indolence.
I teach him how to work, and how command
And curb himself: beneath my guidance mild
He learns to clothe the desert wilderness
With verdure, lonely barren strands to fill
With the enlivening hum of multitudes ;
And with rare galleys that with monsters old
Of ocean vie in hugeness, overcome
Distance, and tempest, and the billows' roar.
I teach all arts of peace ; the poet true,
The inspired sculptor that makes marble breathe,
And all that of heroic scene or deed
Stamp deathless record follow my steep path.
Nor less all arts of war, to tame the oppressor,
Or fence with towers of brass the realms of peace.

“ Nor yet is pleasure absent ; in the glow
Of health by labour kindled, in the strength
That nerves the arm of toil, in the repose
That follows earnest effort, the content
Of inward mind well pleased, the happy sense
Of life not wholly wasted, comes calm joy,
Compared to which how poor the base delight

That idle Pleasure offers ! Nor from me
Or mine is holy Love far absent ;—
Think not she dwells in those luxurious meads !
She in the sacred inner depths of home
Is ever found, and hateth revelry
And wild debauch. Nor think thou that the fumes,
And frantic wild capriciousness of soul,
The grape's rich juice excites, may be compared
With those ennobling thoughts and fancies bright
That in calm reason's soul the gods inspire.
Choose wisely ! and the heavenly powers revere."

She ceased, and her face shone : along that path,
Rugged, in haste the youth his path essayed,
Abashed that he had sighed for Pleasure's joys ;
And as he toilsomely clomb on, far off,
For the white mist in which it lay was lifted,
The glorious palace of the gods he saw.

THE RAVEN AND ITS ADMIRER.

FROM woodland wild such notes were heard
As disturbed each tuneful bird.
To less discordant groves they flew ;
But a sage appeared in view,
Who, smitten with the might of sound,
Cried, humbly kneeling on the ground,
“ Thank heaven that my ears are long
And fit recipients of song !
Never o'er such sweet lays before
Did my enraptured spirit pore ;
But why of such a wild make choice ?
Wherefore hide that charming voice ?
Come forth from this obscure retreat,
Come to scenes more gay and meet !
And let the assembled beasts rejoice
And feel the witchery of thy voice.”

Now this sable-coated bird
Praise before had never heard.

The jay had called her sonnets coarse,
The jackdaw said her voice was hoarse ;
But these are creatures rude and bold,
And she perhaps had had a cold.
So pleased, and with her plumes of dun
Pruned, and strutting in the sun,
She answer made: " Thy gentle praise,
My long-eared friend, my heart doth raise ;
Appreciation is so rare !
None ever could deny me fair,
No better-tempered creature soars
And none more clever with her claws,
None swifter or more strong on wing
And so, forsooth, ' I cannot sing ! '
Their envy harps on that one chord ;
What spiteful things do roam abroad !
But, gentle friend, I hate a crowd,
My voice is rather sweet than loud ;
Here, far from every envious thing,
To thec sweet carols I will sing."

Thus, having rather croaked than said,
She ceased : the ass, delighted, brayed.

HYLAS.

HYLAS, to whom all beauty of fair form
And youthful loveliness of face were given,
Had wandered far from his renownèd ship,
The *Argo*, bound on most adventurous voyage,
But now in harbour resting ; and he bore
In his strong arms an empty vessel huge,
That if by chance some spring he should espy
He might go treasure-laden to his friends.
Long had he wandered vainly, but at length
Amidst a coverture of tangled ferns
He saw the waters of a deep, dark pool.

Joyfully pushing back on either hand
The great green branching ferns, and stooping down,
He saw how pure and clear the water was,
And dipping in his hands filled his two palms
And raised them to his mouth, but tasted not,
For from his hollowed hands the waters bright

Leaped swiftly, sparkling, not a drop remained,
And to his dazzled eyes it seemed as though
A tribe of little golden snakes out-leaped
And vanished in the dark pool's tranquil depths.

Hylas, much wondering, stooped lowly down,
And peering, thought a thousand little fish
With backs of gold were flitting to and fro,
Or round and round circling in shiny maze ;
And as he looked he marvelled more and more,
For now, no longer fish, they rather seemed
Most like light floating locks of yellow hair.
Now a strange trembling seized his manly heart,
And fain he would have fled from that dark pool,
But of his friends bethought him, and their thirst.
Then manfully he seized the pitcher huge
And dipped it deeply, and a hollow sound
Seemed to the youth to murmur, " Hylas, come !
Oh come, belovèd ; lo, we wait for thee ! "

Now dread misgivings seized him, his weak hands
Their hold relaxèd ; and away, half filled,
The pitcher floated far beyond his reach ;
And as he vainly stretched forth trembling arms

Bright visions filled his sight, of golden locks
Down beauteous shoulders streaming, of kind eyes,
And sweetly smiling lips of coral hue ;
And then strange songs came floating on the air ;
And now again poor Hylas longed to flee,
But in a moment twenty lily hands
Updarterd from the pool and seized the arms
Of him bewildered, and with gentle force
Drew him down softly from this upper world,
And joyful bursts of laughter seemed to come
Up bubbling from those dark mysterious depths.

Now, by-and-by, near that most fatal well
Came godlike Hercules with hasty strides,
Searching for his loved comrade ; a huge club
Of gnarled oak he lightly brandished
In his uneasy hands ; above his head
Glared the Nemean lion's fiery orbs
And gleamed its savage teeth. With a loud roar
That also might the royal beast have graced
He shouted, "Hylas!" and the rocks around
Resounded. Suddenly the pitcher huge,
Floating recumbent on the waters dark,
He saw, and cutting anguish filled his soul,

For the moist yielding soil fresh footstep marked
That having reached the pool showed no return.
Again he shouted, "Hylas! where art thou?
O friend, Hylas!" But from the gloomy depths
The hero only heard a faint "Alas!"
Or else some gentle echo's murmuring.

THE ANCIENT FERRYMAN.

“FERRY me, boatman, over to yon shore.”
The boatman seized his oar;
Over the waves the boat doth dance,
The broken ripples glance,
Boat never freight so rich before did bear.

Withered and old and grey and sere
The boatman did appear;
He plied his oar, but now and then,
Turned round to view her face again,
Her azure eyes and face divinely fair.

The happy waves came dancing all around,
Onward the boat did bound.
The ancient boatman to that shore
Never so fast had sailed before,
And as he rowed he still must turn to gaze.

“ And what thy meed ? ” she cried ; the old man smiled,
 His heart was quite beguiled.
“ It is enough,” he said, “ to see ;
 I want no other fee.”

His ancient soul had melted in her beauty’s rays.

The lady looked upon the hoary man
 That was so sere and wan,
And youthful gladness seized his heart,
 He felt old age depart ;
He lost his stooping gait and tangled beard.

From his uncomely grizzled head
 The white locks swiftly fled ;
With golden hair and blooming hue
 In beauty still he grew,
And like some youthful god appeared.

The lovely lady softly took his hand
 And stepped upon the strand ;
About her fragrant breezes blow,
 The goddess bright they know,
And play around the Queen of Beauty’s head.

ALNASCHAR.

Alnaschar in the sun doth dream,
But when he doth awake
Findesth things are not what they seem
And Fortune's glass doth break.

LIVES there the wight whom Fancy's fairy wand
Doth never touch? who never heard the chime
Of Fancy's bells that never silent stand,
Nor heard her witching song and weird-like rhyme?
His life is flat and tame who dreameth not sometime.

The little infant, with fat dimpled cheek
O'er which its wondering eyes can hardly peep,
Would tell its pretty day-dreams, could it speak,
Or how with frightful claws did glaring creep
The mighty cat, with back upraised like mountain
steep.

The little urchin with uplifted knees
Drinks in with his whole soul some talc of war,

How Jack slew cruel giants, big as trees ;
What toils the seven sainted champions bore ;
Or how Prince Arthur's knights jousted in days of
yore.

He thinks he is himself some noble squire,
His step-dame old a dame of high degree,
His slate a shield ; and now he doth aspire
To do some deed of gentle chivalry,
Some damsel fair to save and make her foes to flee.

The blooming maiden from the casement leans,
Resting her fair cheek on her fairer hand,
(Her heart all taken up with fairy scenes)
Marks not the sunset gild the distant strand,
Nor how the sighing breeze her flowing tresses
fanned.

Alnaschar standing idly 'gainst the wall
In Bagdad's famous city, as it chanced,
Had in a basket at his feet his all,
A store of bottles and of glass that glanced
And sparkled as the sun's bright beams about it
danced.

And much Alnaschar loved to idly stand
And see the busy crowds go thronging by ;
He had no taste for Labour's sunburnt band,
But in Sloth's grass-grown garden fain would lie
And wait till Fortune shower her favours from on high.

And now Alnaschar is in pensive mood,
For one of Fancy's elves, in roving by,
Danced past him as in reverie he stood,
Shot bolt of mischief from her wicked eye,
And, laughing, off to streams and shady glades did fly.

“ My store of glass,” he thought, “ will soon be sold ;
And many a basket more of goblets rare
And bottles I will sell, and save up gold,
And wear rich clothes, and feed on dainty fare,
And on my ragged friends with great contempt will
stare.

“ And then I will a jeweller become :
Alnaschar's mart in Bagdad shall be famed ;
His deeply laden ships shall plough the foam.
‘ Alnaschar, the rich man,’ I shall be named,
And by the great and proud my friendship shall be
claimed.

“ The folk shall lowly bend as I go by ;
Great ladies long my state with me to share ;
And I shall deign to cast a favouring eye
On the Grand Vizier’s daughter, tall and fair,
And she, her lord to please, shall strive with all her
care.

“ But I shall keep my state ; too near approach
Greatness loves not, lest it less awful seem.
My coldness she shall meet with no reproach,
But still with loving and sweet smiles shall beam,
And lowly clasp my knees—her love is so extreme.

“ But I, with great disdain, shall toss my head ;
Shall spurn her with my foot—thus——” Lo, a
crash
Made poor Alnaschar turn, now pale, now red.
That luckless foot did all his basket smash,
And all his towering hopes of gifts from fortune dash.

Too late Alnaschar mourned his empty pride,
And his dear lady now would gladly woo ;
And all his haughty ways would lay aside,
And alms and kindly deeds to all would do ;
But Fortune’s broken glass no mortal can renew.

A DREAM.

ON a wondrous lovely day
In this shining month of May,
I left the hot and sunny plain,
And wandered down a shady lane.

Through the hedges to and fro
Merry birds did flitting go,
And all the while their little throats
Warbled forth melodious notes.

In shady nooks, half hid, were set
The speedwell and the violet,
And, needless in so sweet a spot,
Smiled the bright “forget-me-not.”

I said, “It almost seemeth waste
That things so fair should here be placed,
Where hardly any passeth by,
And fewer still these gems espy.”

I laid me down in coolest shade,
And the birds such music made,
I said, "It seemeth waste to me
In desert place such minstrelsy."

Thus I lay till sight and sound
Fled, for sleep the idler found
And kept him tranced with magic spell
While this dream upon him fell.

Methought a lady, passing fair,
Very kind and debonair,
Came, with pleasant, cheerful mien,
Pacing down this alley green.

Much I felt my wonder rise ;
For, like sunlight, shone her eyes,
And her robe was heavenly blue,
With moon and stars depicted true.

Her flowing hair was wet with dew,
Whose little drops about she threw ;
A thousand little rainbows shone
Bright diadems her head upon.

She stoopèd down and kissed each flower
That sparkled with the dewy shower,
And every little blade of grass
Bowed to her as she did pass.

And, circling round, the birds did stand
Feeding from her bounteous hand,
Then gratefully they each and all
Poured their merry madrigal.

There was no flower she did kiss
But was over-full of bliss ;
There was no bird her hand did bless
But carolled forth its happiness.

“Lady,” I cried, “me do not blame :
Tell, I pray thee, what thy name
That art the goddess of this place ;”
And she made answer of her grace.

And as in accents sweet she spoke,
Every slumbering bud awoke,
And every gentle breath she took
Every leaflet sighed and shook.

“ Nature my name ; my children these,
Whom I joy to feed and please :
Their delight I love to see ;
I joy in them, and they in me.

“ Over mountain and through grove,
Unseen to mortal eye, I rove,
Blessing around, below, above ;
I Nature am, and I am love.”

I woke, and knew no flower in vain
Blooming on hedgebank or plain,
Nor is there desert place where bird
Carolleth his lay unheard.

ROXANA.

No gentle lay I sing of worthy knight,
Who in renowned exploit doth pass his days,
Whose happy dreams are of his lady bright,
Who looketh for no guerdon but her praise,
And for a smile each dangerous quest essays.
I rather tell a tale of direful things
That, sung aright, shall grief and wonder raise ;
Of love, the torment of the proudest kings ;
Of hate, that round their throne its baneful shadow
flings.

Great Amurath, the sultan far renowned,
Invading Persia, Babylon's high towers
Doth with his threatening forces gird around,
But to force entry mocketh all his powers ;
His chafing soul frets at the tedious hours.
Force, famine, stratagem, he all doth try ;
Grief at such check his haughty heart devours ;

Meantime the Persian hosts come mustering nigh,
And the long siege to raise vaunt loud their purpose
high.

Their vaunts, their numbers, do not him appal ;

Impatiently their onset he awaits :

His anxious thoughts and cares are centered all

In far Stamboul, within whose palace gates

Lies she, the jewel of his proud estates—

Roxana, whom sultana he had named

Ere yet an heir had granted her the fates,

With so much love had this fair slave inflamed

The stern and haughty breast of Amurath the
famed !

Despotic power within her hands he placed

When honour called him from her charms away.

With crown and sceptre when he left her graced,

He one command alone did on her lay,

That Bajazet, his brother, that same day

That any shadow of suspicion rose

Of treachery, she unsparingly should slay.

The open enemy he seeks he knows

Is not so deadly dangerous as his hidden foes.

His younger brother, Bajazet, whose doom,
By cruel custom of the Moslem race,
Had cut him off from life in youth's fair bloom,
Despite his spirit high, his manly face,
Had there been other heir to take his place ;
But now, last scion of the Ottoman line,
The jealous sultan must accord him grace,
But sternly doth in palace walls confine,
Where that high-mounting soul doth inly fret and
pine.

For his was not the meek and quiet soul
That in domestic thraldom can abide ;
Through his young heart tumultuous passions
rose,
And chiefly love of war and battle's furious tide.
Oft in his boyhood his delight and pride
Had been to dash among the fleeing foe
At Acomat the fierce grand vizier's side,
To deal from fiery steed his harmless blow—
His spirit in the fight, his face with joy aglow.

And, as he brave and stalwart was in fight,
So was he gentle in the peaceful hall,

And of such beauty as did all delight,
And when he spoke he did all hearts enthral ;
Therefore of evil hap it did befall,
Although a thousand watchful eyes were there,
And though he was shut off by bolt and wall,
That that sultana, above women fair,
And this accomplished prince should breathe such
neighbouring air.

For watchful eyes a golden charm may seal,
And walls of stone and iron bolts are frail
When honeyed words the warder's faith may steal.
No wonder that such feeble barriers fail
Against the vizier's cunning to avail :
This leader of the Mamalukes, whose pride
The Sultan Amurath constrained to quail,
Now forced at home ignobly to abide,
His monarch to supplant by subtle treachery tried.

Stay, gentle muse, that hurriest on so fast—
Enough of actors now are on the stage ;
Be patient, whilst our eyes around we cast,
And seek to marshal in this troubled page
The forces, ere their eager ranks engage.

They were the same that in these days we see
Embattled—love, and hate, and furious rage,
Ingratitude, and cruel treachery,
And fiercer things than these, if fiercer things there be.

Love into fair Roxana's heart did glide
When, through the guile of Acomat, her eyes
Beheld the young prince in his youthful pride,
And made her soon her absent lord despise,
Though brave and noble he, and calm and wise.
She told the youth how of his destiny
She held the keys. She watched his colour rise :
A word from her could deadly doom decree ;
A word from her could let him wander free.

Freedom ! To breathe heaven's open air once more,
To hear the winds among the hills rejoice,
To watch the foamy sea-waves toss and roar,—
Ah me ! of happy birds to hear the voice ;
Why need we wonder at the prince's choice ?
Why marvel that, elate, his soul doth soar ?
High projects and proud prospects him rejoice ;
A tide of life seems through his soul to pour :
Pining and discontent shall be his fate no more.

So, with most gladsome voice, he made reply :

“ Fairest sultana, I with joy accept
The freedom thou dost proffer, and shall lie
For ever deeply bound to thee in debt,
And this thy gentle kindness never shall forget.
The rest remains with me. With courage bold,
My sword may carve a path of glory yet ;
My great forefathers’ name I may uphold,
And in the book of fame my name, too, have en-
rolled.”

The vizier Acomat to Roxana fair

Brings tidings false about her absent lord :
“ The murmuring Mamalukes excite his care
And call for Acomat to lead their horde ;
His hosts consume before the Persian’s sword ;
And now propitious fortune seems to cry
The time is come to break this yoke abhorred,
To give to Bajazet the sceptre high
And ’gainst our absent lord war’s stern arbitrament
to try.”

She gave consent, but in her inner mind

Resolved that ere she set the young prince free

She would be frank with him, and seek to find
If truly he her loved ; for he might be
Grateful and gentle, amiably kind,
By nature, not by mighty love inspired.
With dangers girt, she'll trust no impulse blind ;
Love's fiercest beams had her whole being fired,
One surety, at least, her tottering state required.

“ O youth beloved,” to Bajazet she said,
“ Thy hour to quit these halls is near at hand ;
The dangerous crown awaits thy fearless head ;
Around the gates thy armed adherents stand ;—
Great be thy spirit as thy path is grand !
One promise thou shalt give me ere we part—
One thought of self has taught me this demand :
That as our lives are linkèd heart to heart,
Let marriage to that union strength and grace impart.”

He started, he grew pale, he turned aside,
This prince that seemed so full of love and
gladness ;
And she, seized suddenly with jealous pride,
Marking with eyes amazed his silent sadness,
“ O prince, thou lovest me not ! ” in passion cried.

“ I know our monarchs feel themselves too proud
For bonds by which all humbler ranks are tied ;
If this thy scruple, be it now avowed,
For thoughts more bitter far swift on my fancy
crowd.”

But Bajazet’s first love was love of truth,
And he made answer, “ Princess, I must die,
Unhappy ! let me perish in my youth,
And my high schemes and happy dreams lay by ;
Perish, before my tongue shall frame a lie.
No pride of rank it is that makes me pause,
And no contempt have I for sacred marriage laws,
But thou canst ne’er be mine, nor must I tell the
cause.”

Coldly she spoke, “ Yea, thine I ne’er can be ; ”
And with pale death-like visage she retired,
With wavering step and slow. Then murmured he,
“ Ah transient visions which my soul inspired,
As false as ye were fair, how swift ye flee !
This dungeon, dismal bodings, dread despair,
And brief life’s close are all that now are left ;
And one, alas ! my every grief will share,

Whose being this fell stroke in twain hath cleft,
For without me, alas ! how will she be bereft ! ”

She entered as he spoke, fair Atalide,
His beauteous cousin, who from childhood’s hour
Had nurtured been with him, so fate decreed ;
Two lovely plants that side by side did flower,
What marvel if they bowed to love’s high power !
Alike in lineage proud, in dauntless mind,
And both begirt with danger for their dower,
Souls meeter for her spells Love could not find,
And what Love linketh Danger stern doth tightly
bind.

Love taught them guile, their love they had concealed ;
Roxana’s mind suspicion ne’er had crossed ;
Now to her wounded heart all stood revealed,
Her heart by passion and by anguish tossed,
And so all hope for Bajazet was lost.
A look of grief on Atalide he cast,
Then from its scabbard, all with gold embossed,
Drew his keen sword and sighed, “ Thy day is past,
O emblem of my hopes ! our night hath come at
last.”

Then Atalide, when she had heard his tale,
Besought him to unsay what he had said
To the sultana ; long, without avail,
Fresh forces 'gainst his settled mind she led ;
Embraces, tears, bewailings, nothing sped.
She begged him to dissemble, to gain time ;
To think how no return awaits the dead ;
To slay themselves and all their hopes was crime.
"What have we done that we should perish in our
prime ?"

Poor Bajazet ! Thou mayest be brave in fight,
And have a stern soul 'neath that youthful face,
But love the proudest warrior in might
Excels, and in the lists hath still the foremost place.
So thou must yield to love and beauty's grace,
And promise to dissemble to the queen,
And trust to time, that in this mortal race,
With thousand unseen turns doth intervene
And doth strange chances bring the fleeting scenes
between.

The beauteous sultana did not fail
Once more the youth to summon to her bower,

For love o'er fury did once more prevail
And in her tortured heart reigned with resistless
power.

And now no longer doth the blind god lower,
The youth is all submission to her will,
All penitence, all vows, so that same hour
She swears to him her promise to fulfil,
And all misgivings in her heart doth still.

And now a rumour crept to Atalide,
Such poison venomed tongue delights to shed !
That made her tender wounded heart to bleed ;
For in great joy and pride, false rumour said
That happy pair in mutual love so sped,
And looked so lovely in the palace hall !
And all men knew they would be quickly wed.
Poor Atalide ! These dismal tidings fall
On thy poor sensitive heart like bitter gall.

And all the sweetness of her life shrank up ;
She faded, and all beauty left her face ;
She had drank poison from a deadly cup
Whose mortal venom withered all her grace
And all her loveliness did quite deface ;

Death's shadow floated round her. "Ah!" she sighed,
"If of our life-long love I saw some trace,
His life to save how gladly had I died
And, unrepining, left him to his bride!"

Hasten, sad tale, now hasten to thy end!

The Sultan Amurath in triumph crowned
Journeyeth homeward, but before doth send
A messenger for cruel deeds renowned,
Orcan the African, by oath deeply bound
His master's secret purpose to fulfil.

Roxana, all distracted, seeks to sound
Fair Atalide; for jealous cares her still
Afflict; still anxious doubt doth paralyse her will.

A love-letter, which evil chance betrayed,
Made certain all Roxana did surmise,
And she beheld the train that she had laid
Charged with her own destruction. Swift she flies,
And Bajazet by her stern order dics—
Dies like a hero, with his sword in hand,
A mound of slaves around him; but her eyes
See not that sight, but see dark Orcan stand,
Her slayer by her absent lord's command.

Then Acomat, enraged, dark Orcan slew ;
And Atalide the gentle, how fared she ?
When Bajazet's untimely death she knew,
She dragged herself his corpse beloved to see,
Took of that princely face one long last view
And ended then her life. O misery !
O tale of woe, too sad, and yet too true !
Lo, what a welcome Amurath awaits !
Lo, what a triumph send the unpitying fates ! " *

* For the story on which this poem is founded see Racine's drama of *Bajazet*.

TRANSLATIONS AND VERSIONS

THE FOREST.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF G. NADAUD.)

'TWAS in the forest thou lov'st well,
And in that sweet retired grove
Where so oft we used to rove,
That this day-dream befell,

It was the evening of the year—
Time had begun with golden tinge
The garlands of the lime to fringe ;
The sky was cold and drear ;

The sere parched leaves that strewed the ground
Crackled beneath my rustling feet ;
The birds had gone, in climes more sweet
Their melodies to sound.

My idle thoughts went wandering free,
But, as we think of what is dear
When most unthinking we appear,
My thoughts all strayed to thee.

I dreamt I saw thy blooming face,
And straight a ray of glorious heat
The linden-trees began to greet,
Fair Spring the earth did grace.

The groves once more in green were clad,
A thousand warblers sang on high,
The lark soared boldly towards the sky,
And all the world was glad.

In all his sweetness came young Spring ;
But younger, lovelier, far more gay,
Was she who brought the Spring that day,
Whom I delight to sing.

We sat beneath the shadow light
By yonder quivering aspen cast,
And thou wert as in days gone pas'
All lovable and bright.

With voices tunable and low
We whiled the blithsome hours away,
What happy things love has to say !
And loves to whisper so !

And all my faults thou didst forgive,
Yea, thou didst pardon that rash theft ;
There were so many others left
I might steal one and live !

Just then a raven's dismal croak
(Such hap doth lover still befall !)
Was heard, and into fragments small
My pretty day-dream broke.

There was no fair one by my side,
The sky was dark, the leaves were sere,
The birds were mute, the groves were drear,
And dead was all Spring's pride.

THE VILLAGE TREE.

(AFTER THE FRENCH OF G. NADAUD.)

A LITTLE hamlet in a dell
'Mid shadowy mountains pent,
And there a gentle people dwell,
Poor, striving, and content.

A castle old, whose ramparts bold
Have crumbled to decay ;
And now they make for sheep a fold
Where happy lambkins play.

An ancient linden-tree, whose shade
O'erspreads the village green,
Where, dancing, the sweet rural maid
And shepherd swain are seen.

And there upon the Sabbath day,
Its spreading boughs beneath,
Without a priest the Mass to say,
Our simple prayers we breathe.

Our fathers danced beneath this tree,
There uttered artless prayer ;
What marvel if it came to be
Our love, our joy, our care !

A simple scene, a little place,
An ancient village tree,
But decked with some celestial grace
And ever blest to me !

THE COMPANION.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF G. NADAUD.)

TRAVELLER, who so constantly
Everywhere dost follow me,
But whom yet I never see,
 Art thou fair?
 “ I am fair.”
Every night I see thy face
Though shrouded in a dreamy grace,
But with earliest glimpse of day
 Thou flee’st away.
 “ I flee away.”

This dark veil still doth hide
Thine eyes of sorrow ; by my side
Thou dost for ever sadly glide
 Like a shadow.
 “ Like a shadow.”

Like Hope, away thou swift dost go,
But, like Envy, comest slow.
The end of life, ah ! must I see
 And not see thee ?
 “ And not see me.”

Thy speech doth move me so !
But thou still back dost throw
The few last words that flow
 From out my lips.
 “ From out thy lips.”
For love's own sake, I pray,
One hour, but one hour stay,
Thy parting, oh ! delay
 Just until day !
 “ Just until day.”

Now close at hand its ray !
For but this once, I pray,
Be melted by my lay
 Which thee implores.
 “ Which me implores.”

O joy ! I do prevail,
Morn's welcome beam I hail ;
Lift, lift that gloomy veil !
O Heaven ! 'Tis Death !
" 'Tis Death !"

THE SILENT FISHERMAN.

(AFTER THE FRENCH OF G. NADAUD.)

A PATIENT angler, by a river's side,
His murderous line dipped in the floating tide ;
And as he 'gan to quaff that pleasure high
That is so like to pain, he did espy,
Or thought he did espy, sailing full fast,
Two little skiffs gliding each other past,
One up, one down the stream, and each did hold
For all her crew one man,—this young, that old ;
Of diverse aspect were they to behold.
And as their passing vessels skimmed along,
Two voices, turn by turn, chanted this song :—

“HAIL, O SILENT FISHERMAN !”

“ Hail, O silent fisherman !
Doubtless in thy humble cot
Thou livest on, as is thy lot,
In the land which thee begot,
Careless, ignorant, and poor,
Too abject to wish for more ;

A slave in utter bondage tied,
Without pleasure, without pride.
In this hopeless mean estate
Thy soul doth but vegetate ;
Such a life would be to me
Imprisonment and misery.

Hail, O silent fisherman ! ”

“ Hail, O silent fisherman !
Without hatred, without strife,
Doubtless glides thy tranquil life,
Free from all ambitious care.
In thy native country fair,
All on simple joys intent,
Thou livest on in smooth content.
Ah ! mayst thou still contented dwell
In modest state that suits thee well,
And which to me would riches be.

Hail, O fisherman, to thee ! ”

“ Hail, O silent fisherman !
I am young, my soul doth burn,
Danger I encounter can,
For the strange, the high, I yearn.

From my parents' roof I flee ;
Hope flies with me on my hand ;
I hasten o'er the boundless sea
Towards the golden land.

Brothers, sisters, all adieu !
Weep not, I shall come again,
Rich and mighty, home to you.

Hail, O silent fisherman !”

“ Hail, O silent fisherman !
Fortune's fate in youth to try
From home and country travelled I.
Poor and aged I return,
But only for the lost to yearn.
I cannot see, I do not hear,
The looks, the voices once so dear.
My parents, brothers, whither fled ?
And all my ancient friends are dead !
Home nor country have I here !

Hail, O silent fisherman !”

The patient angler listened, still intent ;
The gliding water and the murmuring wind
Were all he heard ; so he, ere sunset, went
Homeward to quiet hearth with peaceful mind.

The promised guests were there, the cloth was laid,
The grace was said, uncovered was the dish,
Long and delicious was the feast they made,
For old the wine and delicate the fish.
Each heart was warmed ; his story or his dream
The silent fisherman 'gan to relate,
And to the voyagers upon that stream
A health they merrily drank in bumpers great.

THE SWALLOWS.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF BÉRANGER.)

A WARRIOR, a captive, in fetters,
Enslaved in the realms of the Moor,
Cried, "O birds that for ever are fleeing
From winter, I see ye once more.

Ye swallows, with whom fair Hope flies
Even into these terrible skies,
'Tis doubtless from France that ye roam :
Do ye bring me no news from my home ?

" I implore ye some tidings to tell me,
Of what in these three long years
Has befallen my valley, my birth-place,
The nurse of my young hopes and fears.
On a bend of a stream whose pure waters
Wind soft 'mid the lilacs gay,
Ye must surely have seen our cottage :
Of this vale have ye nothing to say ?

“ You and I, it may happen, were born
With the same roof of thatch above ;
You must often have listened with pity
To my sad mother’s wailings of love.
She thinks, in her weakness, each hour
She heareth the step she loves well ;
She listens, and listens, and weepeth :
Of her love have ye nothing to tell ?

“ Did ye hear the sweet bells of our village
For my sister’s marriage ringing ?
And the merry voices of maidens
The festival carols singing ?
My comrades in war and in honour
At home do they safely dwell ?
Of so many friends of my bosom,
Ye birds, have ye nothing to tell ?

“ Perhaps o’er their bodies the foeman
Up our valley the pathway takes,
And rules, the lord of our cottage,
And the joy of the marriage feast breaks ;
My mother prays for me no longer :
Chains only are left here below !
Of my country, its troubles, its sorrows,
Ye swallows, ah ! say what ye know.”

THE SUN.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF MOLIÈRE.)

OF all bright things I am the spring,
And all the stars that in a ring
 Of beauty circle me around
Owe all their radiance to their king,
Howe'er they find themselves renowned.

Looking from my throne of light,
I know a longing for the sight
 Of me doth make all nature yearn ;
'Tis the world's supreme delight
 When toward it mine eyes I turn.

Lands where long the sweet caress
 Of my genial looks doth stay
Beauty and delight possess,
 Rich and exquisitely gay.

THE FISHERMAN.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE).

THE water foamed, the water surged,
A fisherman thereby
Gazed on his line in placidness,
With cold and quiet eye.
And as he sat and as he gazed
He saw the depths divide,
And forth a dripping damsel
Emerging from the tide.

She sang to him, she said to him,
“ Why wilt thou seek to bribe,
With wit of man and wiles of man,
To death my finny tribe ?
Ah ! didst thou know how gaily live
The little fish below,
Thou wouldest dive down, just as thou art,
And care no longer know !

“ The sun and moon, ah ! love they not
In the deep sea to lave ?

They shine with double sweetness forth
When mirrored on the wave.

Doth not this heaven tempt thee,
These depths of sparkling blue ?
Tempt not thine own fair image
In this eternal dew ? ”

The water foamed, the water surged,

It wet his naked feet ;

His heart began to yearn as though
His own love did him greet.

She spake to him, she sang to him,
And thus it happed, I ween,

She half did draw him, half he sank,
And never more was seen.

A SONG OF EVENING.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HOFFMANN VON FALLERSLEBEN.)

Lo ! once more evening cometh,
And over grove and hill
Her lullaby Peace breatheth,
And all the world is still ;

Save yonder stream that poureth
Its rocky bed upon,
And loudly rushing, courseth
For ever on and on.

To it Peace never cometh,
No rest it ever knows,
And never bells of evening
Call it to sweet repose.

And thou, O heart so troubled,
Like it no peace shalt know,
Until God's hand a perfect
Long evening rest bestow.

THE SERENADE.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.)

WHAT wakes me from my slumber ?
What can these sweet sounds be ?
O mother, look ! Who is it
That sings so late to me ?

“ I hear and I see nothing,
Rest in thy slumbers mild !
No one doth serenade thee,
As yet, thou poor sick child ! ”

It is no earthly music,
That breathes me such delight ;
'Tis angel voices calling.
O mother mine, good night !

THE FAIR YOUNG FISHERWOMAN.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.)

FAIR maiden of the ocean,
Row on thy bark to land ;
Come to me, sit thee by my side,
Lovingly, hand in hand.

Rest thy fair head against my heart,
And lay all fear aside ;
Thou, fearless, day by day dost trust
The dangerous ocean tide !

My heart is like the ocean,
It rages, ebbs, and flows,
And in its deep recesses
Doth many a pearl repose.

THE HEART.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF NEUMANN.)

EVERY heart hath chambers twain,
Wherein joy doth dwell, and pain.

Joy his merry watch doth keep
All the while that pain doth sleep.

Speak thou low, O joy, and take
Care ; that pain may not awake !

TWO WISHES.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF RÜCKERT.)

Two wishes have I dwelling in my mind :
That in the other world I peace may find,
My toil's reward ; and here may leave a son
To finish all that I have left undone.

I trust that, purified by might divine,
My spirit there may ever brightly shine ;
Whilst here, branch after branch from out my root
On God's fair earth for ever forth may shoot.

O happy plant, twice blessed for evermore !
Soon as the breath of death has passed thee o'er,
Thy fragrance to the heavenly bowers hath gone,
Thy seed remains this earth of ours upon.

“WHITHER AWAY?”

(FROM THE GERMAN OF FRIEDRICH HEBBEL.)

WHITHER away through the deep blue sky
Say, little songster, dost thou fly?
He answer made, “That know not I :
Hither and thither wherever I will,
While I do so I shall fear no ill.”

Now tell, O dearest bird to me,
Tell what it is Hope sings to thee.
“ She says that soft the air shall be
And fragrant ever with the flowers
With which the young Spring decks her bowers.”

These fair new lands thou ne'er didst see,
Yet trustest all shall lovely be?
“ ‘Tis much that thou dost ask of me ;
‘Tis sport for thee to ask, but I
Find it a trouble to reply.”

And now with peaceful trusting mind
The bird sailed forth upon the wind,
Across the sea, and seasons kind
And joy of sweetly fragrant air,
Without a doubt shall be his share.

“MINE HEART, I WILL THEE
QUESTION.”

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HALM.)

MINE heart, I will thee question :
 What is, then, love so sweet ?
“Two souls with one desire,
 Two hearts with but one beat.”

And whence comes love, O tell me !
 “ She comes and here is she ! ”
And how fades love away ? “ Nay !
 What fades can not love be.”

And when is love the purest ?
 “ When self she casts aside.”
And when is love the deepest ?
 “ When stilly it doth glide.”

And when is love the richest ?

“ When she gives all away.”

What sayeth love ? “ She speaks not ; ”

She loves, but nought doth say.”

HOPE.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF GANDY.)

HOPE in the heart's depths sleeps as in the lily's cup
 the dew ;
Hope bursts forth as from clouds, when storm is past,
 the heaven's blue ;
Hope grows, a feeble sproutling, where but barren
 rock appears ;
Like a diamond through water so Hope sparkles
 through our tears.
O poor weak heart of man, although deceived a
 thousand-fold,
Still thou turn'st thee heavenward, sadly trusting,
 bold,
As Arachne, never tiring, spins a new web every day
Which the Fates still daily with rough fingers sweep
 away.

“HEART, MINE HEART!”

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.)

HEART, mine heart, be not dejected !

Still thy task pursue !

Spring will bring back all that winter

Stolen hath from you.

And how much is yet remaining !

And how fair the world is still !

Happy heart of mine if only

Love toward all things did thee fill !

TO THE ABSENT.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF LENAU.)

HERE in stranger land I gather
A lovely rose for thee ;
For thee, for thee, fair maiden,
I pluck it joyfully.

Yet, long ere the weary distance
Between us is o'erpast,
This fair flower will withered be ;
Roses do not last.

Love from love should never wander
Farther o'er the land
Than a rose-bud may be carried
Blooming in the hand ;

Or than moss, his nest to build,
The nightingale may bear,
Or than his sweet melody
May float along the air.

THE RICHEST PRINCE.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF J. KERNER.)

GERMAN princes at the diet in the lordly palace hall

Praises of their own fair realms were pouring one and all.

“ Noble,” said the Saxon prince, “ and mighty is my land ;

Shafts of purest silver hide deep in our mountains grand.”

“ Mine the realm of teeming plenty,” cried the land-grave of the Rhine,

“ Valleys full of golden corn, hill-sides of noble wine.”

“ Mighty cities, abbeys rich,” Bavarian Ludwig said,

“ Have my kingdom not less wealthy than its stately neighbours made.”

Eberhard, the bearded one, to Wurtembergers dear,
Said, “ My towns are little, and no silver hills we rear,

Yet have we a hidden treasure ; in our forests dread
Fearless I in any subject's lap may rest my head."

" Bearded one !" cried Saxony, Bavaria, and the
Rhine,

" Thou art richest ; priceless jewels hath this land of
thine ! "

HAROLD.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.)

BEFORE his stalwart army rode
 Harold, that hero true ;
All in the moonlight marched they on
 A wildsome forest through.

And many a war-worn flag they bore
 High waving in the sky,
And many a warlike song they sang
 Among the hills rang high.

What creeps, what rustles in the bush ?
What forth from the trees doth beam ?
What leapeth down from the cloud above ?
What dives 'mid the foam of the stream ?

What scattereth the flowers around and around ?

What is it so sweetly sings ?

What dances among the troopers' ranks,

And up on the horses springs ?

What hugs so softly, and kisses so sweetly,

And holds so gently fast ;

And steals away sword, and pulleth from horse,

And leaveth no peace at last ?

It is the light-armed elfin host,

Whom no might can withstand ;

E'en now the warriors all are lost,

They are in fairy land.

But he, the best, remains behind,

Harold the hero bold ;

From crown of head to sole of foot

Bright steel doth him enfold.

His warriors are all fled from sight ;

There sword and buckler lie ;

The horses, from their masters free,

Wild through the forest fly.

In sorrow deep rode on his way
 Harold, that stately knight,
He rode alone the forest through
 Beneath the fair moon-light.

A bright brook bubbled from a rock,
 He sprang him down in haste,
He lifted from his head his helm
 The water cool to taste ;

But ere he well his thirst could quench
 His limbs began to sway,
Perforce he sank down on the rock
 And nods and sleeps alway.

Hundreds of years he now hath slept
 Still on that self-same stone,
With head sunk down on breast, and beard
 And hair that white hath grown.

When lightnings flash and thunder rolls
 And winds in forest rave,
Then, dreaming, graspeth at his sword
 Harold, the old and brave !

TAILLEFER.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.)

WILLIAM, the Norman duke, did loudly call—
“ Who is it sings in my courtyard and hall ?
Who sings from morning late into the night,
So sweetly that my heart leaps with delight ? ”

“ It is the Taillefer who so loud doth sing,
Without, when drawing water from the spring,
And in the hall when he the fire doth tend,
From the first dawning till the day hath end.”

Then spake the duke, “ One good slave waits on me,
This Taillefer, who doth serve me piously :
He water draws, and well the fire stirs,
And with his gallant song my spirit spurs.”

Then spake the Taillefer, “ And were I but free,
Much better would I serve and sing to thee !
How would I serve on horseback high in field !
How would I sing and ring with sword and shield ! ”

Ere long the Taillefer rode forth in the field ;
On a high horse he rode with spear and shield.
Him the duke's sister from a tower espied :
“ God's grace ! ” quoth she ; “ there doth a hero
ride ! ”

And as he rode along before the lady's tower
He sang like summer breeze at first, and then with
tempest's power.
She said, “ Behold, he singeth, and with such noble
art
Trembleth the tower, and trembleth within me my
heart ! ”

Duke William sailed across to England's coast,
Across the ocean with a mighty host ;
He sprang ashore, but fell upon his hand ;
He cried, “ I grasp and wed thee, fair England ! ”

And as the Normans fiercely onward strode,
Before the duke the valiant Taillefer rode.
“ For years I sang and did thy fire stir,
For years I've sung and wielded sword and spear ;

“ And all for love I served and sang to thee,
First as a slave and then as horseman free :
To-day this boon I pray on me bestow,
That I against the foeman may strike the foremost
blow.”

The Taillefer rode before the Normans all,
With sword and spear upon a charger tall ;
He sang so bravely that o'er Hastings' field
The song of Roland loudly rolled and pealed.

And as the storm-like song swept through the sky
Heaved many a proud breast, many a heart beat high ;
With burning ardour all their spirits swell,
The Taillefer sang and stirred the fire so well !

Then sprang he forth and gave the first spear-thrust,
Straightway an English horseman bit the dust ;
Then drew he sword, and struck the foremost blow,
Straightway an English horseman lay full low.

The Normans saw and did not tarry long,
But rushed with clang of shield and warlike song.
Ah ! arrows rattled, sword-strokes thundered loud,
Till Harold fell, and sank his army proud.

The duke his standard on the bloody plain
Planted, and pitched his tent among the slain ;
There sat he, with a golden cup in hand,
And on his head the king's crown of England.

“ My valiant Taillefer ! hail to thee, thrice hail !
Never in weal or woe did thy song fail,
But the clang of Hastings' field and the ringing of
thy song
Shall be music in my ears, throughout my whole life
long.”

“

*SONG OF A SWABIAN KNIGHT TO
HIS SON.*

(FROM THE GERMAN OF FR. GRAF ZU STOLBERG, A.D. 1138.)

SON, my spear is now thine own,
For this arm too heavy grown !
Take my cross-bow, take my shield,
Lead my horse forth to the field !

Lo, fifty years this helmet bright
Hath bedecked this hair now white,
And each year sword and battle-axe
With dint of combat blunter wax.

Axe and cross-bow to me gave,
In old days, Duke Rudolf brave ;
Pleased, with him I chose to stay
And rejected Henry's pay.

His right hand in freedom's cause
Freely forth its life-blood pours,
Whilst the French with his left hand
Valiantly he did withstand.

Stand thou forth in armour bright !
Conrad musters for the fight ;
Make me not, O son, deplore
That these limbs can fight no more.

Never raise in vain thy hand
For thine own free fatherland ;
Watchful be in camp, and sage ;
In the field a tempest rage !

Be still ready for the war ;
Rush where hottest sword-thrusts pour !
Spare the yielding unarmed band !
Hew him down that doth withstand !

When o'er-borne thy troopers brave,
And in vain the banners wave,
Then thyself a barrier throw,
A strong tower against the foe !

By the sword thy brothers died,
Seven sons, thy country's pride !
And thy mother grieved and pined,
Spoke not, sighed not, but declined.

Weak am I and lonely now,
But, my son, thy shame, I vow,
Seven times bitterer to me
Than all their seven deaths would be !

Therefore tremble not at death !
Trust in Him that gave thee breath !
So thou fightest like a knight
How will thine old sire delight !

"I STOOD AND LEANT AGAINST THE MAST."

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.)

I STOOD and leant against the mast
And counted every wave ;
Fair fatherland, adieu ! lo, fast
Sails on my shallop brave.

My loved one's house now pass I by,
Her windows brightly shine ;
I gaze forth with a straining eye
But back returns no sign.

The tears she sheds not dim my sight ;
Well know I it is so !
My stricken heart, break thou not quite
With overwhelming woe !

“ONCE ON MY TOO DARKSOME LIFE.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.)

ONCE on my too darksome life
A fair vision streamed its light :
Now that that sweet beam hath faded
I am wholly wrapped in night.

Children, when the darkness folds them,
And their spirits sink away,
From their fears to disenthral them
Sing some carol loud and gay.

I, a wilful child, I also
In these days of darkness sing ;
Poor my song, yet hath it power
Comfort to my heart to bring.

THALATTA! THALATTA!

(FROM THE GERMAN OF ROBERT PRUTZ.)

UPON the ocean what delight
To rock the livelong summer night,
When the moon has climbed on high
And the billows slumbering lie
Beneath their starry canopy !
Calm the shadowy earth doth fill,
And ocean's self is wondrous still
Save that the night winds wandering go
Carrying greetings to and fro.
Now the star of love shines bright.—
To rock the livelong summer night
Upon the ocean, what delight !

What joy the ocean o'er to fly
When the storm bursts from on high !
When the fluttered birds fly fast ;
Timbers crashing, bending mast !
Lurid lightning flashing past !

What a battle ! What a war !
Sea and heaven in wild uproar !
Man alone serene doth stand,
Fast the tiller in his hand ;
Him no trembling cometh nigh.—
When the storm bursts from on high
What joy the ocean o'er to fly !

THE BELL-FOUNDER OF BRESLAU.

(AFTER THE GERMAN OF WILHELM MÜLLER.)

IN Breslau once a master
A noble art did ply ;
His handiwork resounded
From many a steeple high.

He was a worthy craftsman,
In word and deed renowned,
And famous bells he founded
Of pure and heavenly sound :

Such bells, so purely tempered
That when their voice they raise
It is not music only
But love, and prayer, and praise!

But crown of all his castings,
For sweetness and for power,
Is that pure bell that sounds from
The Magdalena tower—

That solemn bell that tolleth
When prisoners go by,
For their crimes' expiation
A death of shame to die.

It is a tale of sorrow,
A piteous tale to tell,
The doings strange and fearful
At the casting of that bell !

That day the worthy master
Had laboured hard and long ;
The molten metal bubbled,
The mould was firm and strong.

The metal of the purest
Was ready to be cast ;
The master smiled, his labour
Was nearly o'er at last.

But ere the work he finished
A stoup of liquor good
He longeth for to freshen
His nerves with hardihood.

He leaves a boy as watchman
To watch the fire burn,
But earnestly forbids him
The caldron tap to turn.

No sooner had the master
The founding chamber left
Than that poor boy 'gan tremble
Like one of wits bereft.

His ears were all a buzzing,
His brain began to burn,
His fingers all were tingling
That fatal tap to turn.

He knows not what he doeth,
He turns it with rash hands ;
The rushing metal hisseth,
The boy belated stands.

At length in frantic terror
He to his master flies,
And pale, with staring eyeballs,
For mercy wildly cries.

One word the master heareth,
And, guessing quick the rest,
His knife in frenzy driveth
Deep in the urchin's breast.

Now to his founding chamber,
In wild bewilderment,
Full of an unknown terror,
The wretched master went.

No drop of metal running
The caldron from he saw,
But found a perfect casting
Free from all fleck and flaw !

The boy on earth is lying,
His work he sees no more ;
“ O master, frantic master,
Why smotest thou so sore ? ”

Into the hands of justice
Himself the master gave
And wept ; the judge, too, sorrowed
To see there man so brave.

And yet he cannot save him,
Man's blood for blood doth cry ;
He heareth his death sentence
With courage firm and high.

And as drew near the hour
When he must forth be led,
“ What last grace wilt thou ask now ? ”
They to the brave man said.

“ I thank ye,” spake the master,
“ Ye worthy gentles kind !
Truly there is one longing
Upspringeth in my mind.

“ Would you but once permit me
To hear the new bell toll ?
I wrought it, and would fain know
If it be sound and whole.”

And what he asked they granted,
It seemed a little thing ;
And as he passed the tower
The bell began to ring.

The master heard the ringing,
So loud, so pure, so clear :
Joy in his soul up-welling
Found vent in many a tear.

His eyes, lo, full of radiance,
All glorified appear !
It was not music only
That sounded in his ear.

His neck he now down bendeth
Gladly beneath the sword ;
His eyes had pierced death's shadows,
He enters them unawed.

His soul's delight still hangeth
In Breslau to this hour,
And solemn music pours from
The Magdalena tower.

CHIDHER.

(AFTER THE GERMAN OF FRIEDRICH RÜCKERT.)

(THIS the song is whilom sung
Chidher by, the ever young.)

To a city fair I came one day,
And there, in a garden passing gay,
One plucked fruit: to him I say,
“ How old is this city, I pray ? ”
The old gardener plucked away,
And with wondering looks did say,
“ It was for ever where to-day
It standeth and will stand for aye ! ”

When five hundred years had fled,
Thitherward again I sped.

There no vestige did remain
Of city; but his artless strain
Piped on oaten reed a swain
Whose flock pastured on the plain.

I asked. "How long has the city been gone?"
He spake, and still on his reed piped on,
"Things may wax and things grow wan,
Flocks ever pasture these meads upon."

And when five hundred years had fled,
Thitherward once more I sped.

There found I a sea, the blue waves flow,
A fisherman forth his nets doth throw,
And as he rested, "How long ago
"Came hither the ocean, dost thou know?"
He, laughing aloud at my words, did say,
Since ever those waves began to play
And to dash the rocks with their foam and spray
Man hath fished and fished in this ancient bay."

And when five hundred years had fled,
Thitherward once more I sped.

And there a forest did I see,
And a forester toiling toilsomely:
He was felling with his axe a tree.
I asked, "How old may this forest be?"

“ The forest,” quoth he, “ is an ancient thing,
And its shadows broad doth for ever fling ;
And here for ever my axe doth ring,
And for evermore fresh trees forth spring.”

And when five hundred years had fled,
Thitherward once more I sped.

There found I again a city fair,
And the market people were shouting there.
“ How old is this city ? ” I cried ; “ and where
Are forest, and ocean, and piper rare ? ”
But the screeching people went on their way,
And would hearken to never a word I say ;
Thus hath the world gone for many a day,
And thus will the world go round for aye !

And when five hundred more years have gone
I shall gaze once more that spot upon.

THE MINSTREL'S CURSE.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.)

IN olden time there flourished
A stately castle grand,
Whose lofty turrets glittered
Far over sea and land.
Around lay spacious gardens
With flowery blossoms bright,
Where many a bright stream sparkled
In radiant rainbow light.

And there a haughty monarch
Now sat his throne upon,
A monarch rich and warlike,
But gloomy, dark, and wan.
He museth—there is terror ;
He glanceth—there is woe ;
He speaketh—there are scourges ;
He writeth—blood shall flow.

One day, unto this castle came
A noble minstrel pair :
One old and grey, one youthful
With flowing golden hair.
A harp the old man carried,
A comely horse he rode ;
And by his side, with blithe step,
His youthful comrade strode.

The elder to the youth said,
" Now, O my son, prepare !
Cull forth our choicest lyrics
And sing with loftiest air !
Blend all our powers together,
Joy's laugh and sorrow's moan ;
We need all arts to soften
This monarch's heart of stone ! "

The minstrels in the stately hall
Are standing side by side,
And on the throne are seated
The monarch and his bride :
The king, with dreadful aspect,
Like blood-red Northern-light ;

The queen as fair and gentle
As the goddess of the night.

The elder touched his harp-strings,
And played so wondrous well
That sweeter, ever sweeter,
His lovely notes up-swell ;
And still, amid the pauses,
The youth's pure voice forth rang :
It was as if from heaven
Some angel quire sang !

Of Spring, and love, and freedom,
Of some happy age of gold,
Of truth, of deeds heroic,
And of holiness they told :
They sang of all things lovely
That can the bosom thrill,
Of all things high that man's heart
With thoughts of glory fill.

The courtiers crowding round them
Forgot their winks and nods ;
The king's defiant warriors
Bowed to them as to gods.

The queen, with wondrous sorrow
And wondrous joy possessed,
She threw down to the minstrels
The rose-bud from her breast.

“ Ye have bewitched my people,—
My wife now will ye charm ? ”
The king cried, raging fiercely,
And trembled, hand and arm.
He hurled his sword which, flashing,
The young man’s bosom gored ;
Instead of heavenly music
A stream of blood out-poured !

As though a storm had smote them,
Away the listeners fled ;
And in his master’s arms lay
The youthful singer, dead.
He wrapped him in his mantle,
Bound him upright on his horse,
And thus from hateful castle
The old man took his course.

The minstrel old yet halted
The portals high between.

And there, his loved harp seizing,
That was of all harps queen,
Against a marble pillar
He it to fragments broke,
And in harsh tones, that grated
Through hall and garden, spoke :—

“ Woe, woe to ye, proud halls !
Never more may harp’s sweet note
Or happy voice of singer
Through your silent chambers float !
No, nought save sighs and groanings,
And the tramp of servile feet,
Till ye to dust and mire
Down hurleth vengeance fleet !

“ Woe, woe to ye, O gardens, now
So sweet with May’s fair grace !
Behold, I bare before ye
This youth’s disfigured face !
May ye by it be blasted,
May every stream run dry ;
A barren, rocky desert,
May ye for ever lie !

“ Woe to thee, caitiff murderer,
Thou bane of minstrelsy !
In vain may all thy struggles
For Fame’s blood-stained garland be !
Thy name forgot for ever,
In endless darkness wreathed,
And like a last sad death-sigh
In empty air out-breathed ! ”

The minstrel old hath spoken,
And heaven hath heard his cry.
Down crumbled are those proud halls,
And low those turrets lie ;
One single lofty column
Attests their vanished state,
And, tottering and feeble,
Doth its own end await.

Around, instead of garden fair,
A waste and barren land ;
No tree lends shade, no brooklets
Refresh the arid sand ;
No hero-book, no legends,
The monarch’s name rehearse ;
Down-sunken and forgotten !
This is the minstrel’s curse !

SONNET.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF RÜCKERT.)

SILVER and gold no longer will I praise,
For gold and silver sank to nothing down
When our wise fatherland, with sternest frown,
Iron to gold and silver's place did raise.

The strong of arm, now let him prove his might,
And whirl his iron sword, of nought afraid,
And homeward bearing it with jagged blade
A cross of iron shall his toil requite.

Your golden, silver, sparkling orders all,
In splinters break before the sterner iron ;
They fall because they saved not us from fall.

Let only henceforth our young knights of iron
Welded in iron wall our land environ !
For metal not for tinsel now we call.

THE CHAPEL.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.)

Lo ! The chapel there doth look
Calmly down the vale along,
While o'er meadow and o'er brook
Floats the shepherd boy's gay song.

Now the bell pours note of sadness,
And yon wailing band draws nigh ;
Silent is that song of gladness,
And the boy looks up on high.

To her rest they there are bringing
One who lately was so glad !
Some day others shall be singing ;
Thou the still one—shepherd lad !

"UNWEARIEDLY FOR AGES."

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.)

UNWEARIEDLY for ages
The stars shine forth on high,
On one another gazing
With sad and yearning eye.

They speak in their own language,
So lovely and so grand,
And yet there is no linguist
Their speech can understand.

But I have learnt and never
Forget what it doth mean ;
And who hath been my teacher
But thou, my heart's fair queen ?

“ WHEN FRIEND FROM FRIEND TAKES LEAVE.”

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.)

WHEN friend from friend takes leave
Each other's hand they shake ;
A thousand sighs they heave,
Tears from their eyelids break.

But we, we did not cry,
We sighed not Ah ! and Oh !
Our sighing it came by and by,
Our tears took time to flow.

THE GLOVE.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER.)

BEFORE his lion-garden sat the king,
Waiting in state to see the royal sport,
His nobles ranged around him in a ring ;
And, high in air, the ladies of his court
In a gay balcony shone bright and fair.

At a sign from the monarch's hand
The gates wide open stand,
And with deliberate air,
And with a quiet stare
On the people gazing there,
Stalked in a lion brave
And a great yawn gave ;
Then his mane he shook,
Stretched his limbs and took
His rest for awhile on the sand.

Once more the monarch's hand
Waved, and from a second door
Sprang fiercely forth upon the floor

A tiger. When the lion proud
He saw, he roared aloud,
And his angry tail
Threshed like a flail
The ground around ;
And with lean tongue out
He wheeled shyly the lion about,
Angrily snarling ; at that his foe
Just stretched himself and growlèd low.

Then the king beckoned again,
And from out of their double cage
There rushed forth leopards twain,
Who, kindled with fiery rage,
Straight for the tiger bore,
Whose angry claws them tore ;
And the lion, with a roar,
Rises : then all is still.
Wild thirst for blood doth fill
The grey cats couched in the ring,
Ready to spring.

Then from the height of the hall
A glove off a fair hand was seen

The tiger and lion between
On the ground to fall.
And on Herr Delorges, in mocking wise,
The lady Kunigunde bent her eyes :
“ Sir knight, if truly thou lovest me so
As thou didst say
But yesterday,
This instant go,
And bring me that my glove away ! ”

And the knight, with fearless tread,
Stepped lightly to that place of dread,
And from amid those beasts of prey
Boldly drew the glove away.

This with amazement and with awe
Knights and noble ladies saw ;
Back the glove he calmly brings,
While each voice with praises rings ;
But with tender look of love—
Earnest of the guerdon due—
His lady greeted him from above ;
Then to her the glove he threw :
“ No thanks, O lady, will I take ! ”
And from that hour did her forsake.

A SONG OF A BRAVE MAN.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF BÜRGER.)

LIKE organ peal, or rich-toned bell,
To praise the brave my proud song swell !
Who hath a spirit brave and strong,
His meed not gold is, but a song ;
That I can sing my God I praise,
That I the brave man's fame can raise !

A thawing wind from the southern sea
Blew, damp and raw, over Italy ;
The dark clouds blew before the wind,
Like scattered flocks from the wolf behind ;
It swept the fields, it tore the oak ;
On lake and river the ground ice broke.

Among the mountains melted the snow :
From a thousand springs the torrents flow,
The floods the flowery valley hide,
And the river races with furious tide ;

High rolled the waves among the rocks,
High rolled the ponderous icy blocks.

A bridge lay over the river there
With pillars huge and arches fair,
Built proudly on solid blocks of stone ;
And a little house stood thereon alone ;—
There dwelt the toll-man with child and wife ;
O toll-man, toll-man, flee for thy life !

Crash came on crash with a fearful sound,
Howled wind and wave the house around.
The toll-man sprang on the roof with a shout,
And gazed on the turmoil that raged without.
“ O merciful Heaven, take pity on me !
All is lost, all is lost !—no refuge I see ! ”

The ice masses thundered, blow upon blow,
From each rocky bank rebounding they flow,
On both sides the raging torrent tore
Pillars and arches their fury before.
The trembling toll-man with wife and child,
Howled louder than waves or storm-wind wild !

The ice masses thundering, crash on crash,
Against the bridge on both sides dash,
Till, shattered and asunder torn,
Pillar and pillar away are borne.
Destruction the little house draws nigh.
“All-merciful Heaven, look down from on high !”

Away on yon distant bank behold
A crowd of gazers, young and old !
And hands are wringing, and sobs are loud;
But no aid lendeth that gazing crowd.
The trembling toll-man, with wife and child,
Is screaming for help through the tempest wild.

Now, “brave man’s song,” when wilt thou swell
Like organ peal or rich-toned bell ?
Call forth thy hero ; haste, O pray !
My fairest song, why make delay ?
Lo, ruin frowns the cottage near !
O brave man, brave man, hasten here !

A count now galloped up at speed,
A gallant count on gallant steed.
What is it that he forth doth hold ?
A heavy purse filled full with gold.

“Two hundred pistoles to the brave
Who saves these from a watery grave!”

Higher and higher the wild spray flew,
Louder and louder the fierce wild blew,
Lower and lower their faint hopes lay,—
O rescuer, rescuer, speed on thy way!
Pillar and pillar are broken and gone,
And shattered and fallen the arches thereon.

“Hullo! Hullo! Be bold and dare!”
High held the count the prize in air.
A thousand hear him, a thousand fear,
And none dare venture the ruin near.
For help, in vain, through the tempest wild,
Shouted the toll-man with wife and child.

Lo! now, a peasant, a poor plain man,
With staff in hand before them ran;
And mean and coarse his garb, but high
Of stature was he, and of noble eye.
He heard the count, his meaning saw,
And gazed on that wild scene of awe.

He seized the nearest fisher-boat,
And in God’s name he forth did float;

In spite of tempest and foaming wave
Happily sped the rescuer brave :
But alas ! the skiff was all too small,
Few as they were, to save them all !

He thrice, in spite of storm and surge,
Across the eddies his boat did urge,
And thrice success did him befall,
And now he hath happily rescued them all ;
And just as in haven safe they lay
The last of the ruin crashed away.

Who is the brave man ? Say, now say !
Tell on, tell on, my noble lay !
The peasant his life in pawn did lay,
But did he so for the golden pay ?
Then had the count not proffered his gold,
Nothing had risked the peasant bold.

“ Here,” cried the count, “ brave comrade mine,
Come here, take this, the prize is thine ! ”
Say on, was this not nobly meant ?
God’s grace ! The count had high intent,
But yet a heart far loftier still
That peasant’s humble breast did fill.

“ My life may not with gold be bought ;
Poor I may be, yet want I nought.
The toll-man, who hath lost his all,
On him now let thy bounty fall ! ”
Thus he in simple sooth did say,
And turned him round, and went his way.

To praise the brave, O proud song swell,
Like organ peal or rich-toned bell !
Who bears a spirit brave and strong
His meed not gold is, but a song.
That I can sing my God I praise,
That I the brave man’s fame can raise !

THE END.

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